

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

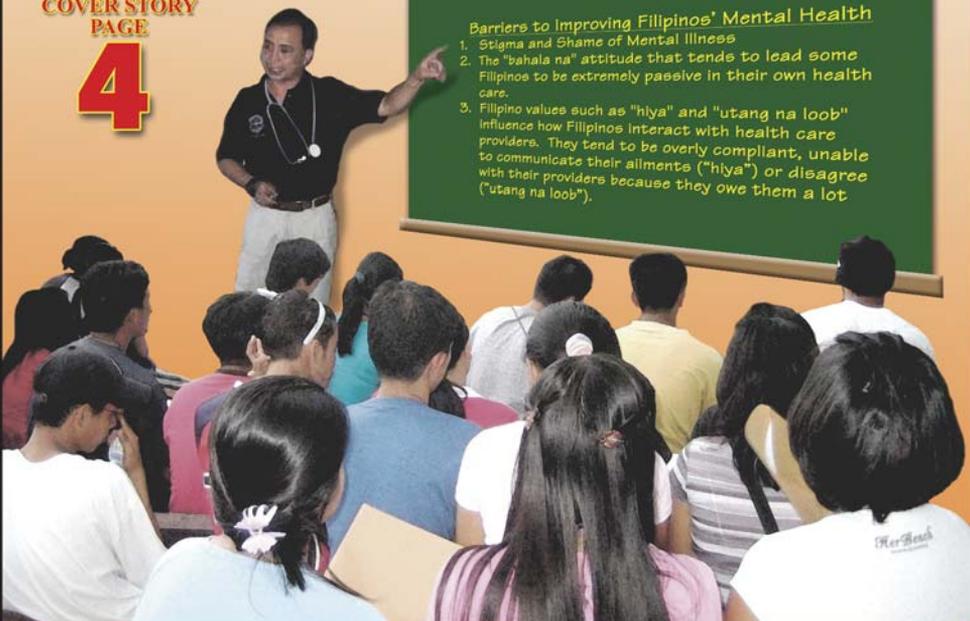
HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ AUGUST 23, 2008 ◆

FILIPINOS AND MENTAL HEALTH

COVER STORY
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Barriers to Improving Filipinos' Mental Health

1. Stigma and Shame of Mental Illness
2. The "bahala na" attitude that tends to lead some Filipinos to be extremely passive in their own health care.
3. Filipino values such as "hiya" and "utang na loob" influence how Filipinos interact with health care providers. They tend to be overly compliant, unable to communicate their ailments ("hiya") or disagree with their providers because they owe them a lot ("utang na loob").



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EDITORIAL

Importance of Treating Mental Illnesses

Millions of people and their families suffer from the effects of mental illness. Unfortunately, a stigma associated with the condition continues to persist. In fact, the fear and shame associated with mental illness can be traced back many centuries and could very well be one of mankind's oldest known prejudices.

Unfortunately, many people don't consider mental illness as a legitimate medical condition but rather a problem caused by one's own choices and actions. Others think that a mental health disorder means that a person is weak or lazy and that the problem is "all in your head." Not surprisingly, those who suffer from mental disorders tend to shy away from seeking medical help for fear of ridicule or losing their job and important relationships.

For Filipinos, mental illness is more of a cultural shame. Should a person's family found out about his or her condition, it is usually kept as a closely-guarded secret. Initially, they will turn to a priest or the support of friends and each other. The family will seek professional help only if the symptoms turn violent or significantly disrupt the person's ability to function day-to-day.

Today, extraordinary advances in the treatment of mental illness means that many mental health disorders—*anxiety, substance abuse, phobia, Alzheimer's Disease or schizophrenia*—can now be treated nearly as successfully as physical disorders. If symptoms interfere with your ability to be satisfied and effective at work or school and in personal relationships, it's a good idea to seek professional help as soon as possible. Don't suffer in silence.

A Sneak Peak at the Mayoral Race

What a difference a month makes. In early July, few political candidates were willing to take on incumbent Mufi Hannemann, who seemed unbeatable. Things changed, however, when Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi entered the race, seemingly intent to push for a rubber-tire-on-concrete system for the City's multi-billion dollar mass transit system. Now less than a month before the Primary Election on September 20, there is word of concern from insiders at the Hannemann camp.

The reported concerns are plausible, depending on which viewpoint you take. If you are of the belief that a vote for Mufi is a vote for a steel-wheel-on-steel rail mass transit system, then it would be safe to say that the incumbent should win the Primary outright with more than the required "50 percent of the vote plus one vote." A poll conducted by SMS Research in July 2008 showed that 46 percent of respondents favor steel-wheeled trains on steel tracks, compared to 36 percent who preferred another technology and 18 percent who were undecided.

However, if you believe that Oahu residents tend to vote in "ethnic blocks," then you may be on to something. Most observers would agree that Kobayashi will carry the Japanese vote as well as the Chinese and Korean vote, while the Hawaiian and Filipino vote will go to Mufi. However, Kobayashi will most likely have the Caucasian vote, given that many of them reside in Waikiki, East Oahu and the Windward side and oppose mass transit. Observers also expect the Republican Party to campaign against Mufi, given speculation that he may be eyeing the governor's race in 2010 and a possible run against Lt. Gov. Duke Aiona.

With all of this uncertainty, it's best for both campaigns to continue working hard and not take the opposition for granted. However, we think that the former scenario, rather than the latter, will play itself out—although it's still very early and much could change in the coming weeks, particularly the outcome of efforts to place the rail question on the November ballot for voters to decide once and for all.

Stay tuned.

FROM THE PUBLISHER



loha and welcome to another edition of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle—the top Filipino ethnic community newspaper in Hawaii! Now that summer has ended, we can all expect an increase in traffic. The Hawaii State Department of Transportation says that up to 60,000 university, college and private school students will be returning to school during the week of August 25! If you want to Beat the School Jam, please be mindful and adjust your travel time accordingly or consider alternative commuting options.



For those of you who didn't realize it, August 21st marked the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino. His killers yet to be identified and brought to justice. Locally, the Philippine Consulate General of Hawaii held a mass in Aquino's honor at Saints Peter and Paul Parish Church. On page 12, we have an article on one writer's thoughts on who ordered the assassination, as well as a brief side-bar about a new documentary film entitled "Beyond Conspiracy: 25 Years After the Aquino Assassination," which was shown to the Filipino community in San Francisco. While the late senator's name may be lost to most of the younger generation, he is certainly a hero to older Filipinos who remember life under marital law imposed by former Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos. Aquino's death signaled the beginning of the end for the Marcos dictatorship and served as the turning point in the Philippines' struggle to regain its democracy. Aquino may be gone forever, but his spirit lives on. Mabuhay ka, Ninoy Aquino!

Our cover story for this issue is about mental illness, which has a negative stigma for Filipinos and most Asians in general. Millions of people suffer from mental illnesses of varying degrees, yet many choose to remain untreated due to the shame and stigma that society has associated with mental illness. Filipinos especially will delay seeking medical help until the symptoms become really problematic. Fortunately, recent advances in medical care mean that many mental illnesses are treatable. If you suffer from bouts of depression or know people with other symptoms of mental disorder, we encourage you to seek immediate help. Please read more on pages 4-5.

In closing, we again hope that you will enjoy reading this jam-packed issue. We have many other articles for your reading pleasure, including the Mayor's Column, Immigration Guide, Ask a Doctor, Philippine Language, Family Corner and Legal Notes. As always, thank you for your support!

Aloha and Mabuhay!

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MAYOR'S COLUMN



By Mayor Mufi Hannemann

Senator Obama's Visit Highlighted Our Home

white, whether they're Japanese-American or Korean-American or Filipino-American ... that all of us can work together and all of us can join together to create a better country. It's that spirit that I'm absolutely convinced is what America is looking for right now."

Some mainland Americans no doubt view Hawaii as foreign and exotic, or as a destination for frivolous junkets. But Senator Obama and many others know better, and those who help shape public opinion about national politics should too.

In other news, the City's Department of Community Services has increased the maximum limit of its Housing Rehabilitation Loan program from \$80,000 to \$150,000.

These loans allow homeowners to make home repairs, accessibility improvements, and address health and safety issues. Income-qualified owner-occupied applicants may obtain interest-free loans and be allowed to partially defer repayments for the 15-year term of the loan.

Many older homeowners have significant equity in their homes, yet live on limited fixed incomes and often hesitate in making needed repairs. The City's program offers liberal repayment options to ensure that even those with very limited re-

sources can be assisted. We urge qualified homeowners to seriously consider tapping into this important program to ensure their homes are safe and comfortable as they grow older.

Hawaii's older population is growing at a rate faster than most other states. Surveys clearly indicate that most older adults would prefer to live at home, "aging in place," as opposed to moving to an institution. Having a variety of housing options is highly desirable. Improvements to the home such as grab bars, widened doorways, non-skid floors and proper lighting provide more options and making aging in place possible.

Funds for the loan program are made available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grant program.

Anyone interested in applying for or learning more about the City's Rehabilitation Loan Program can call the downtown office at 768-7076 or the Kapolei Hale office at 768-3240.

Here's some more good news: Your city government is consuming only 5.7 percent more electricity now than we were five years ago, despite the activation of important new facilities and infrastructure assets that help protect public health and safety. That's a remarkable achievement, made possible because we have offset this increased energy demand with energy savings throughout other areas of city operations.

Some new facilities that require electricity include the East Honolulu Police Station, the Honolulu Fire Department headquarters, emergency ambulance facilities in Kalihi and Kapolei, the Kapolei Corporation Yard, and 45 sets of school warning flashers and other traffic signals at various locations.

New equipment at the Sand Island Wastewater Treatment Plant, such as a disinfection unit that uses ultraviolet light, created some of the heaviest increases in energy consumption, but these improvements were necessary to protect our coastal waters.

The bad news is that the cost of electricity has increased for everyone, including the city. We will continue to work hard to conserve energy whenever possible, without jeopardizing public health and safety.



Mayor Hannemann and City Parks Director Les Chang speak with Senator Obama at Hanauma Bay

I'm very proud that Senator Barack Obama recently chose to visit the city of his birth, and to enjoy many of the same things we all do, such as a walk on Kailua Beach and a swim in Hanauma Bay. We're working very hard to make sure these public treasures remain safe, clean and welcoming to everyone.

But like many of us, I was disappointed and saddened by the insensitive remarks that a TV network political analyst made on August 10 about the visit.

The commentator unfortunately reinforced a tired stereotype about our home by stating that the visit "has the look of him going off to some foreign, exotic place." We've heard this sort of thing too many times before.

A more insightful analyst would have recognized that Hawaii provides a wonderful example of the diversity and tolerance that America's future depends on. Senator Obama remarked soon after his arrival that our aloha spirit represents "the ability of people from everywhere, whether they're black or



Mayor Hannemann welcomes Senator Obama to Hanauma Bay



Mayor Hannemann escorts Senator Obama at Hanauma Bay

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Mental Illness: Symptoms and Treatment

"When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless, and intelligence cannot be applied." — Herophilus, Greek physician (335-280 BC)

By Marya Grambs and Dr. Kimo Alameda

Mental illnesses—sometimes called mental disorders or emotional problems—are terms used to describe conditions that cause mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behavior, resulting in a person's inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines.

Such illnesses affect children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Stress and trauma can play a role in moving someone from a place of mental health to one of mental illness.

Mental illnesses also have a genetic component—they run in families, so that if one or more relatives have had mental ill-

nesses, one's chance of having a mental illness is increased.

Mental Illnesses Affecting Adults

Anxiety disorders are the most common group of mental illnesses, affecting over 10 percent of the population (over 120,000 people in Hawaii). Anxiety disorders include:

- Panic disorder—sudden, intense feelings of paralyzing terror with symptoms that may resemble a heart attack.
- Phobias—overwhelming fear of particular objects or fear of situations.
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder—fearful thoughts and behaviors (obsessions) that



a person tries to cope with by repeating words or phrases or doing repetitive, ritualistic behaviors (compulsions), such as constant hand washing.

- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—an often-recurrent reaction to a terrifying, life-threatening traumatic event, such as wartime experiences or sexual assault or abuse. Symptoms include reliving the event, coldness to others, sleeplessness, memory problems, poor concentration, and little interest in outside activities.

Depressive or mood disorders affect 6 percent to 10 percent of us each year. According to the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH), about 42,000 people ages 18-54 report having an episode of major depression each year. With appropriate treatment, usually both counseling and medication, more than 80 percent of people improve substantially. Depressive disorders include:

- Major depression—an extreme or prolonged episode of sadness and despair in which a person has difficulty thinking, concentrating, and enjoying the pleasures of life, and finds it difficult to function.
- Bipolar disorder (also called manic-depression)—episodes of extreme mania ("highs") alternating with

severe depression ("lows").

- Dysthymia—continuous low-grade symptoms of depression and anxiety—feeling unhappy all the time.
- Postpartum depression occurs in about 15 percent of mothers following the birth of a baby, and can range from brief "baby blues" to dogged, persistent postpartum depression to, in a small percentage of cases, full blown postpartum psychosis.

Schizophrenia affects about one percent of the population (over 12,000 people in Hawaii) each year. Symptoms of this complex and severely disabling mental illness usually appear during adolescence or early adulthood (ages 15-25), but sometimes begin earlier or later in life too.

Symptoms may include: delusions, hallucinations (hearing voices or seeing things that are not present), fragmented thoughts, disconnected or incoherent speech, withdrawal from the outside world, extremely inappropriate feelings, or unusual physical movements.

Dementing illnesses are a group of brain disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease, in which brain cells die and are not replaced, leading to impaired memory, thinking, and behavior. The State DOH says that approximately 20,700 people over age 65 in Hawaii have Alzheimer's disease.

Mental Illnesses in Children, Adolescents

The following are the different types of children's mental health problems:

Adjustment disorders are when children are unable, for a time, to adapt to stressful events or changes in their lives (such as moving, death in family, divorce). They may have difficulty in school or social situations, or they may have physical symptoms with no medical cause.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is the inattentiveness that creates challenges for children in school and other activities that require focus, but does not necessarily involve disruptive or hyperactive behavior.

Disruptive Behavior Disorders include:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a pattern of behavior combining inattention, distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity that usually appears before the age of seven.
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)—hostile and defiant behavior lasting at least 6 months, in which a child manifests at least four of the following behaviors: often loses temper, argues with adults, actively defies or refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules, deliberately annoys people, blames others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior, is often touchy or easily annoyed by others, is often angry and resentful, and is often spiteful or vindictive.
- Conduct disorder: Children may refuse to follow rules at home or in school, become truant, delinquent, or even violent.

Anxiety disorders are a group of disorders (separation anxiety, avoidance disorder, phobias, fear of school, eating disorders, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder), in which anxiety is the main symptom. These disorders may show up as physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches), as disorders in conduct (refusal to go to school), or as inappropriate emotional responses (crying, giggling).

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COVER STORY



Eating disorders cause a person to adopt harmful eating habits. They are most common among teenage girls and women, and frequently occur along with other psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety disorders. The poor nutrition associated with eating disorders can harm organs in the body and, in severe cases, lead to death. The two most common types of eating disorders are anorexia (self-starvation and excessive weight loss) and bulimia (bingeing and purging).

Mood disorders are disturbances in a child's mood which are not due to other physical or mental illnesses. Bi-polar disorder (manic-depression) and childhood depression (major depression) are examples of mood disorders, which generally respond well to medication.

Pervasive developmental disorders are disorders in which the brain has difficulty processing information. There are distortions, deviations and delays in the development of social and motor skills, language, attention, perception, and reality testing.

Autistic spectrum disorder begins during infancy or childhood. The infant may lack a social smile, avoid eye contact, and fail to cuddle. The child fails to develop the usual bonding with parents and other people, fails to develop normal language, and may use nonverbal commands in place of speech.

Schizophrenia (see above) frequently shows up in adolescence or young adulthood, although may also occur at a younger age.

Suicide Rates

More people die from suicide than in car crashes or homicides. For some age and

ethnic groups, Hawaii's suicide rate is higher than the national average. Almost all suicides are preceded by negative life events. The two most common are intimate relationships problems or end of a relationship (24 percent) and serious illness (21 percent).

With regard to Hawaii's youth, our state has the highest percent of adolescents (17 percent) who report making a suicide plan and the 2nd highest percent of youth who report that they seriously considered attempting suicide (nearly 20 percent) and who report having attempted suicide (13 percent). Ninth graders, girls and Native Hawaiians report the highest rates of all.

Treatment For Mental Illnesses

Most mental illnesses are extremely treatable by a combination of talk therapy and medication. Most people can and do recover.

Experts say that there are simple things everyone can do to enhance and protect their mental health. For instance, we can talk to friends and families about what's bothering us. We can contribute to our community or help others. We can eat right, get exercise and get enough sleep.

"We mustn't hesitate to consult a professional if we feel overwhelmed," says Dr. Celia Ona, who has over 40 years of experience as a psychiatrist. "Things like depression can affect even the best of us."

Dr. Ona is also the director of the Mood Disorder and Interventional Psychiatry Program at the UH John A. Burns School of Medicine. She previously served as the Medical Director of Kahi Mohala Behavioral Healthcare, specializing in psychopharmacology, treatment resistant depression, eating disorders and electroconvulsive treatment.

For most mental health

problems, the best treatment is a combination of talk therapy and medication. There are dozens of medications that treat mental health problems. It is important to work with a health provider (primary care physician, advanced practice nurse practitioner, or psychiatrist) to find the best medications at the best dosages to relieve the symptoms and to take medication without stopping.

Mental Health Treatment For Filipino Patients

Despite the approximately 275,000 Hawaii residents who identify themselves as Filipino or part Filipino, only 6 percent of patients with the Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD)—the state agency which provides mental health services to adults with serious mental illness—identify themselves as Filipino. Consequently, Filipinos appear to underutilize mental health services.

In a recent interview with Dr. Antonia Austria, medical director of Kalihi-Palama's Community Mental Health Center (CMHC), and Dominic Inocelda, program administrator of Susannah Wesley, there seems to be several primary explanations for the underutilization of services.

First, Filipinos tend to have close-knit families and it is not uncommon for the family to bear the responsibility of caring for their own.

Second, due to the stigma and shame of mental illness, many Filipinos use their primary care physician as the "prescribing" doctor and do not seek care in the mental health system.

Third, some Filipinos speak English as a second language and this may deter them from services due to a lack of bilingual staff and qualified interpreters.

Fourth, a percentage of Filipinos don't have insurance to pay for psychiatric care. Therefore, some choose to stay out of the system until the illness is so serious that other agencies such as the police or the courts intervene.

In addition, the families of a person with mental illness have concerns that it might impact on immigration. Many families are petitioning for other family members to immi-

grate and they may be afraid that an ill family member may jeopardize their ability to petition since that person must be financially cared for by the family and/or needs to receive State financial assistance from the Department of Human Services (DHS).

There is also sense among many Filipinos that if someone in the family receives financial assistance from the State or Federal government, it could prevent them from petitioning for other family members.

Lastly, some Filipinos rely on the power of their faith and/or religion. The vast majority of Filipinos are Roman Catholic and mental illness may be interpreted in terms of guilt and punishment. The attitude of

bahala na ("It's in the hands of God"), may lead some Filipinos to be extremely passive in their own health care.

Filipino values may also influence how they interact with health care providers. The value placed on maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships may cause Filipinos to be overly compliant by responding "Yes Doktor" to everything, feeling unable to disagree with the provider or feeling the shame of being unable to understand what is being said.

Dr. Ona encourages those suffering from anxiety, depression, agitation or other problems to seek immediate help.

"Don't suffer in silence," she says. "Early intervention is always best."

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A Dose of Dr. Alquero Keeps Hawaii's Filipino Community Healthy

By Glenn Wakai

He was born Edwardo Alquero in the Philippines. But as soon as he became a U.S. citizen, the physician from

Waipahu changed his name.

"I was told by a friend that I would have an easier time in America as Edward rather than Edwardo, so I legally became Edward," says Dr. Alquero.

Besides his name, Dr. Alquero has also changed many lives, ever since graduating from Santo Thomas Medical School in 1972. Currently, he runs a busy family practice just off Farrington Highway in Waipahu.

Early Days in Pampanga

While growing up in Pampanga, Alquero had no desire to be a physician. Rather than examine bodies, he wanted to examine balance sheets. His mother recognized his smarts and encouraged him to study medicine, rather than business. He comes from a family of five boys.

"I was the only one who was studious, while my siblings were not," he says. "They were always playing around. I had good grades in high school."

Two of his brothers are still in the Philippines, while the other two are in the U.S.—one of whom resides in Houston, Texas. When Alquero visited

him in 1981, he met a woman named Arlene from Hawaii who was attending nursing school there. She would eventually become his wife.

Discovering Hawaii

Alquero wanted to establish his medical practice in California but fell in love with Hawaii during a vacation here in 1986.

"There was not too much traffic and the beaches were beautiful," said Alquero. "Another factor that compelled me to move here was that there was no discrimination for foreign doctors, like myself."

Practicing medicine in the Philippines wasn't in Alquero's plans. He says he didn't want to be frustrated by offering patients a lower standard of treatment.

"In the Philippines, patients cannot afford to pay for technology, so there is very little preventative care. Unlike here where you can check your cholesterol or high blood pressure. In the Philippines, there are no tests for other ailments.

"You just treat the symptoms you can see. No one gets a prostate or colon cancer screening, or a mammogram or a pap smear."

That lower standard of health care is evident when comparing life expectancy and infant mortality in the Philippines to the U.S. In the Philippines, the infant mortality rate



Dr. Edward Alquero

Tim Ulena Photography

is 24 per 1,000 and men can expect to live 67 years, and 72 years for females.

By comparison, the infant mortality rate in the U.S. is 6 per 1,000. Here, men can expect to live 75 years and women for 81 years.

Savings-Lives One Patient at a Time

Looking back on his two decades of practicing medicine, Alquero prides himself on the generations he has helped to remain healthy. He is a big advocate for prevention.

"When you see a patient for a check up and then diagnose them for an illness that didn't realize they had, that makes me feel good. When they recover, that makes me feel even better.

"Many Filipinos have hypertension and high blood pressure. They don't show symptoms early on but I help them change their lifestyle and diet to avoid the number one killer in the U.S. which is heart attack."

HFH President

Alquero's betterment of the community goes far beyond his Waipahu office. For the past five years he has been President of the Hawaii Filipino Healthcare (HFH). The group of doctors assist in matching Filipino patients with physicians who understand their needs. Many recent immigrants feel more at ease interacting with someone

who speaks their language and understands their culture.

"Hospitals are getting patients out quickly, rather than when they are ready. We're seeing patients coming back due to a relapse, or suffering from a similar ailment."

Alquero in Iran

Alquero cares deeply for his patients, whether here or abroad. He is a man of the world. He studied in England for a year to complete his post graduate studies.

He even speaks Farsi. Alquero picked up the language during his four years practicing medicine in Iran. He was there in the late 1970s, when Islamic militants stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran and seized 66 Americans. The hostage takers demanded the shah's extradition to Iran but President Jimmy Carter refused.

Negotiations for the hostages' return began after the shah died in July 1980, but the remaining 52 hostages were kept in captivity until January 1981. As an emergency room doctor, Alquero witnessed much of the bloodshed during that time. He says the color of his skin was a real asset.

"They didn't hate us. They love Asians. It was dangerous if you were Caucasian."

Alquero's Future

Alquero has two daughters both of whom attended Punahou school: Kristien, 24, is currently majoring in biological science at Stanford University, and Kathleen, 21, a junior at the University of Southern California, who is pursuing a business degree.

When Kathleen graduates from college next year, the 59-year old Alquero is thinking of slowing down or retiring. He used to be hooked on golf but quit the game six months ago due to his heavy workload. He would like to be able to swing his clubs again soon.

This Pampanga native has come a long way and acknowledges the sometimes bumpy path he has taken.

"I have no regrets. I enjoy the opportunity to be able to help lots of patients. If I had a chance to do it all over again, I would choose to be a doctor."

Glenn Wakai is a State Representative (Salt Lake-Moanalua) and former television news reporter.

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IMMIGRATION GUIDE



By Atty. Emmanuel
Samonte Tipon

WW II Vet Seeks Probe of US Consulate for Insulting Wife and Belittling Sexual Prowess

A Filipino World War II veteran, now a U.S. citizen, who was awarded the Purple Heart has asked Hawaii's powerful congressional delegation to initiate an investigation of U.S. consular officers in Manila for subjecting his wife to indignities and making snide references about his age and sexual ability and telling his wife "you should have gotten a young man." He is 81 and his wife is 50.

On 08/08/08, the veteran wrote to Sen. Daniel Inouye, Sen. Daniel Akaka and Rep. Neil Abernethy, that USCIS approved his visa petition for his wife. However, the consulate refused her a visa after three days of intensive grilling by the dreaded Fraud Prevention Unit.

Both Senators Inouye and Akaka are World War II veterans. Sen. Inouye was also a Purple Heart awardee. He is the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations committee. Sen. Akaka is the Chairman of the Senate Veterans Committee.

The veteran prayed, for the sake of other women who will be interrogated, that Congress investigates this improper conduct by consular personnel and put a stop to it.

Too Old to Play Immigration Game

The veteran, a member of the Philippine Army, who was wounded in the Battle of San Mateo, said that at the end of the third day his wife could no longer endure the grilling and was "coerced" into signing a document that her marriage "was for the sole purpose of immigrating to the United States." The woman apologized to her husband for signing it, saying that she signed it "just to get it over with, even though it was not true." The U.S. consul used this document as a reason for denying her a visa.

The veteran said that he and his wife "were shocked at this kind of treatment." He said: "When we married, we in-

tended to fulfill the responsibilities of a husband and wife. We love each other very much. Our marriage is not intended to evade the immigration laws. The genuineness of our marriage has been established by documentary evidence submitted to USCIS."

"I am too old to be playing games -- like bringing a person to the U.S. for immigration purposes," the veteran said.

Cannot Afford Living in Philippines

The veteran's wife asked him to return but he demurred, saying that his \$400 veteran's pension will be cut in half and his SSI of \$200 will stop. One cannot live on a \$200 income in the Philippines, especially since I would have to buy my own medicines," he explained.

Two Other Wives Similarly Disparaged

At least two other wives of octogenarian Filipino-Americans have been denied visas because of age differences. However, their husbands retained us to represent them. We were able to overturn the denial. (Read our column "How late bloomer can bring young wife to America without really trying, Philippine News, July 30, 2008)

Letter to the Husband

Here are excerpts from the wife's letter to her husband quoted in his letter to the Senators and congressman. The interrogation was in Tagalog.

"Sabi nina, paano ka daw mamahalin. Matanda ka na daw, at dimo na raw ako kayang paligayahan"

(He said, how can I love you. You are an old man and you are not capable of making me happy (apparently referring to sex.)

"Sagot ko, hindi lang naman yon ang nagpapaligaya sa tao. Masaya na ako na may makakasama ako sa buhay."

(My answer was, it's not only that (referring to sex) which can make a person happy, I am happy if I have a companion in life.)

"Sagot naman nina, makakasama pala ang kelangan mo, bakit matanda kinuha mo,

dapat bata."

(He said, if you just want a companion, why did you get an old man, you should have gotten a young man)

"Ang sabihin mo kaya mo lang siya pinakasalan ay dahil gusto mong maging immigrang sa U.S. Sagot ko hindi totoo yon, mahal ko ang aking asawa, kaya nga gusto kong pumunta doon para magkasama kami, at maalaan ko siya lalo na pag-maykaramdaman siya, bago man lang kami paghiwalayin ng kamatayan, gusto kong ipadama sa kanya na mahal na mahal ko siya, sabi ko. Pero ayaw pa rin niyang naniniwala, kundi talagan iniipit niya ako, wala daw siyang makitan pag-mamahalin doon, kasi nga daw matanda ka pa ke Nanay."

(You should say that you married your husband because you just want to immigrate to the U.S. I replied that it is not true. I love my husband, that is why I want to go there so we can be together and I can take care of him particularly when he is not feeling well, before death separates us. I want to express to him that I really love him, I said. But he still did not



believe me, but he tried to squeeze me, saying that he could not see any love there, since you are even older than my mother.)

Abangan

Will the veteran succeed in bringing his wife to America where they can spend the sunset of their lives living in beautiful Hawaii?

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Laong City. He has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University

of the Philippines. He served as an Immigration Officer. He is co-author of "Immigration Law Service," an 8-volume practice and procedure guide for immigration officers and lawyers. He specializes in immigration and criminal defense. Office at 905 Uni St. corner N. King, Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96819. Tel. (808) 847 1601. Fax (808) 847 1624. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.ImmigrationServiceUSA.com. Listen to the most interesting and humorous radio program on Hawaii radio KNDL 1270 every Friday 7:30-8:00 AM. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice for any specific person or situation. Neither the writer nor publisher warrant the completeness or accuracy of the information provided herein at the time of publication.)

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Hirono Announces \$2.6 Million in Fed Funding for Crime Victims

Congresswoman Mazie Hirono announced that programs in Hawaii that assist victims of crimes and that help to improve the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women will receive over \$2.6 million in grants from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Of the amount, \$1.7 million will be used at the state and county levels to assist victims of crimes, which include domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and elder abuse. Assistance may come in the form of crisis intervention, emergency shelter, counseling, information and referrals and advocacy in the criminal justice system.

Funds will also be used to aid survivors of homicide victims. Sub-grants support both government and non-profit service providers. This grant is



Congresswoman Mazie Hirono

awarded out of the U.S. Department of Justice's Victims of Crime Act Crime Victims Fund, which acquires its funding from fines against people convicted of federal offenses.

About \$950,000 will go toward assisting adult female victims of domestic violence and sex assault. The funds will be utilized in a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing violent crimes against women. That approach includes training law enforcement officers, court personnel, prosecutors

and non-profit victim service providers to more effectively identify and respond to crimes such as sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking.

The grant supports both multi-disciplinary and jurisdictional efforts as well as agency level projects such as specialized domestic violence prosecution and law enforcement units. In addition, non-profit agencies provide core victim services and address underserved populations.

This grant is awarded out of the U.S. Department of Justice's STOP (Services-Training-Officers-Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grants Program.

UPAAH to Install President for 2008-2010

The University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Hawaii (UPAAH) will hold its biennial installation of officers on August 29, 2008 at the Hale Koa Hotel Banyan Tree Showroom.

Alma Ballefsin-Phocas (UP Los Banos B.S. Forestry 1982) will be inducted as UPAAH president, along with 10 elected members namely. They are: Divina Robillard (President-Elect); Lilia Q. Santiago (Secretary); Dennis Bonodoco (Treasurer); Homer Rabara (Auditor); Jon Ellis Pangilinan (PRO); and board members Irineo Gappe Jr., Godfredo Rivera Jr., Jane Misola, Sergio Domondon and Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand.

Honolulu District Court Judge Rey Grauly has been invited to induct the new executive officers and board members. The installation will include a formal recognition of the Association's Board of Advisers. This distinguished board is comprised of UPAAH presidents led by outgoing president, Leorosis Zabalan.

The evening will be graced

by the presence of four UPAAH members who are now part of an elite group of UP Centennial Celebration Distinguished Alumni Awardees. The recognition was bestowed by the National University of the Philippines Alumni Association during the recent University of the Philippines Centennial Celebration and Alumni Homecoming held at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City, Philippines.

The four honorees from Hawaii were Dr. Belinda A. Aquino who received the 2008 UPAA Lifetime Distinguished Achievement Award; Dr. Jorge Camara for International Achievement; and Dr. Amefil M. Agbayani and Dr. Teresita V. Ramos for Academic Leadership.

The public, alumni, family and friends are encouraged to join this evening of camaraderie and reflection of UP spirit. For Ticket information, please contact event chair Bea Ramos-Razon at 778-6291 or via email at bramozazon@aol.com. Updates can be obtained by emailing upaahawaii@yahoo.com and or by going online to: www.upaah.blogspot.com.

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Book Sale at Ewa Beach Library

The Friends of Ewa Beach Library will conduct its Fall Book Sale on Saturday, September 6, 2008 at the Ewa Beach Public & School Library at 91-950 North Road.

The book sale will be held in the library's meeting room from 10:30 am-2:30 pm.

Members of the Friends of Ewa Beach Library will be allowed to shop for items prior to the sale on Friday, September 5, 2008 from 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm. Members will also be admitted at 10 am on the day of the sale.



Books, magazines, CDs, DVDs, and videotapes will be sold at bargain prices. Come early for the best selection.

Proceeds from the sale will be used to fund various items such as library programs, equipment, and furniture.

Ewa Beach Public & School Library is located on the campus of James Campbell High School. For more information, please call the library at 689-1204.

Quezon Mayor, Manila Official Visit Honolulu

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Secretary Bayani Fernando were among attendees at a recent seminar series hosted by the East-West Center (EWC).

The two Philippine government officials attended the EWC series entitled "The Urban Transformation in Asia: Policy Implications of Decentralization."

Despite their busy schedule, Mayor Belmonte and Secretary Fernando made time to meet with members of Oahu's Filipino com-

munity. They attended a mass at St. Joseph's Church in Waipahu, which was officiated by Father Santiago Ner. Both men mingled with the mostly Filipino parishioners and spoke with them about the Philippines.

The Philippine Consulate also held a reception for them on August 12. In attendance were members from the Hawaii State Legislature and other leaders in the Filipino community.

Also in attendance were Dr. Aprodicio Laquian from the University of British Columbia, Dr. Bindu Lohani from the Asian Development Bank and attorney Olegario Cantos from the U.S. Department of Justice.



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PHILIPPINE NEWS

War or Peace: GMA Gives MILF Ultimatum

by Paolo Romero



President Arroyo apparently issued an ultimatum yesterday to the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) challenging the rebels to choose between war or peace, following the guerrilla attacks in Lanao del Norte and Sarangani that left scores dead last Monday.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the President demanded the MILF leadership to surrender rogue commanders Abdulrahman Macapaar alias Commander Bravo, and Ameril Umbra Kato who led the rebel groups that attacked the villages and killed more than 40 civilians and soldiers.

He said in the past, the government tolerated and let pass minor skirmishes between its forces and the MILF on the latter's excuse that these were perpetrated by rogue elements.

"This excuse has been abused for too long and the President now draws the line," he said.

Ermita said Mrs. Arroyo ordered the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to hunt the MILF commanders and directed government agencies to provide humanitarian assistance to the affected communities.

"President Arroyo is angered and deeply frustrated by the treacherous acts committed by the MILF that have now clouded the prospects of an early positive conclusion of the peace process between the government and the MILF," Ermita said during a news conference at Malacañang.

He said the President also "detests the MILF leadership's lack of control" over its so-called base commanders.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro offered P5 million each to anyone who can give information leading to the capture of Macapaar and Kato who led the rampage in Kolambagan, Kauswagan, Linamon, Maigo and Bacolod in Lanao del Norte and Maasim, Sarangani.

The PNP had filed 61 separate criminal complaints against Kato and other MILF commanders who were responsible for terrorizing several villages in North Cotabato two weeks ago.

"The President regrets that the

MILF's failure to restrain its field commanders reflects the organization's lack of sincerity to push for a successful conclusion of the peace process," he said.

Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera also told the Supreme Court that the Arroyo administration will not sign the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) with the MILF following the attacks and an impending review and possible renegotiation of the controversial agreement.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez earlier said the attacks were virtually a declaration of war by the MILF.

Ermita said the latest posture of the government was also an implicit warning to the top MILF leaders that if they cannot stop the actions of their subordinates, they would also be legally held accountable.

He said while the MILF leadership were denying or disowning the atrocities of Macapaar and Kato, the former appear to not only be fully aware but were actually directing the attacks.

Ermita said Mrs. Arroyo directed the military and police forces to conduct pursuit operations against the MILF rebels, during the Cabinet security cluster meeting at the Palace on Tuesday night.

He said military and police operations would only be suspended when Kato and Macapaar are neutralized and all their hostages released.

Mrs. Arroyo also warned other armed groups not to take advantage of the situation in Mindanao by undertaking their own destabilization efforts, he said referring to communist rebels. "In such occurrences, government armed forces will not hesitate to act in a manner that is most appropriate and swift to contain these groups," he said.

She also instructed the Departments of Social Welfare and Development, Health, Education, Defense, Interior and Local Government and other agencies to assist local government officials provide relief and rehabilitation to the affected residents, Ermita said.

Ermita said Mrs. Arroyo welcomed the call made by Commission on Human Rights Chairperson Leila de Lima for the MILF to surrender Macapaar and Kato.

(www.philstar.com)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

SWS: Noli, Loren, Villar are Top Presidential Bets

by Helen Flores

Vice President Noli de Castro again topped the latest survey of Social Weather Stations (SWS) on preferred presidential choices in the 2010 national elections.

Sen. Loren Legarda was the next choice followed closely by Senate President Manuel Villar.

Thirty-one percent of 1,200 Filipino adults interviewed in the survey chose De Castro to be the next president, SWS said.

The respondents were allowed to give up to three names in the non-commissioned survey conducted from June 27 to 30.

Twenty-six percent chose Legarda and 25 percent went with Villar.

Following the top three were Sen. Panfilo Lacson (16 percent), Sen. Francis Escudero (14 percent), Sen. Mar Roxas (13 percent), former President Joseph Estrada (11 percent) and Sen. Francis Pangilinan (two percent).

Compared to the previous quarter, the proportion of those who mentioned De Castro went down by four points from 35 percent, and down by four points for Legarda (from 30 percent to 26 percent).

Fewer respondents also named Escudero, declining by

five points from 19 percent to 14 percent, and by three points for both Roxas (from 16 to 13 percent) and Estrada (from 14 to 11 percent).

Villar, on the other hand, received an increase of eight points (from 17 percent to 25 percent) and by four points for Lacson (from 12 percent to 16 percent).

De Castro also topped the list of "presidentiables" for the 2010 elections in the recent Pulse Asia survey. Estrada placed second.

The SWS survey had sampling error margins of plus or minus three percent for national percentages and plus or minus six percent for area percentages.

Malacañang welcomed yesterday De Castro's ranking in the SWS survey with deputy presidential spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo saying this is "primarily attributed to the good partnership" between the President and the Vice President.

Fajardo also attributed the survey result to the contribution of De Castro to the government's efforts in addressing the basic needs of Filipinos, particularly providing shelter as housing czar and as he supervises and monitors the concerns of overseas Filipino workers.

"As an alter ego of the President on food security, he also sees to it that staples are available to our constituents at cheaper government prices and he also serves as a conduit of the executive branch to other programs and projects focused on alleviating the plight of the poor," Fajardo said.

Teodoro for president?

Although not normally found on the survey list of possible presidential candidates, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro will make good presidential material, according to Sen. Edgardo Angara.

"Roxas, Marcos and Macapagal were all bar topnotchers and so is Teodoro. It is not far-fetched for him to become president of the Philippines and we will support him," said Angara during the event.

Teodoro, who has often been rumored as one of those being eyed for the presidency by the ruling Lakas-CMD in 2010, said he felt honored by the senator's remarks. He also did not disclaim plans of running for the presidency.

Teodoro however said that at the moment, his focus is to do his job as defense secretary and continue the reform programs of the Department of National Defense (DND) under the Arroyo administration. (www.philstar.com)



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Erap Fires Lim as PMP Head

by Jose Rodel Clapano

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim has been removed as president of former President Joseph Estrada's party, Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

In a telephone interview with The STAR, Estrada said Lim's dismissal was a party decision made during a caucus.

"It was a decision of the majority of the party," he said.

Estrada said he has taken over as PMP president because Lim was too busy to attend to his obligations to the party.

"I have no job, while he is very busy with his job as the mayor of Manila," he said. "So what will I do? That is why I took the job."

Estrada said Lim's removal is part of the PMP's overhaul in preparation for the 2010 presidential elections.

"We are strengthening the party all over the country," he said. "We wanted to be prepared when we face the administration



Joseph Estrada

in 2010."

After learning that he had been removed as PMP president, Lim tendered his resignation in a letter to Estrada yesterday.

Estrada said Lim is a political butterfly and one of those who abandoned him during the civilian-backed military uprising that drove him from Malacañang in 2001.

"He is like a political butterfly," he said.

"During the People Power II, he said he will just call the Philippine National Police to look at the situation at EDSA.

"But after a few hours, I learned that he was already on

stage at the EDSA Shrine."

However, Estrada said despite what Lim did to him in 2001, he has already forgiven him.

"That is why I endorsed him when he ran for senator and for mayor of Manila," he said.

"I think these are all temporary political differences. But in a way Lim is now the lone break-away group of the PMP."

Estrada said despite their differences, the opposition would still welcome Lim to its fold.

"Everybody's welcome in the opposition, and he said that he is staying in the opposition," he said. "But I've heard that he is joining (President) Gloria (Arroyo)."

In a separate interview, former Ambassador Ernesto Maceda said Lim's removal as PMP president will not be a political setback to the opposition.

"I don't think it will be major political setback to the opposition." (www.philstar.com)



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FAMILY CORNER



By Grace F. Fong, EdD and Sylvia Yuen, PhD

Protect Children from Violence (Part 1)

Violence is learned. Children naturally observe, listen to, and imitate whatever they see and hear. They experiment with new ideas. It's how they learn. If violence is what they see and hear, violence is what they learn. When they observe others yelling at each other, they copy the same facial expressions, body posture, and tone of voice.

Children are exposed to

different forms of violence in many ways. They may see and experience it in their homes—yelling, screaming, swearing, hitting, using angry words and body language, or hurting with their other actions. They may see people acting violently in everyday situations—driving aggressively, making cruel remarks, or intentionally intimidating someone. Children are also exposed to violence through the media, such as comics, magazines, movies, videos, video and computer

games, music, and TV. Pictures of violent scenes on posters, ads, and magazine pages along with aggressive music and angry songs all seem to say that violent behavior is acceptable. Children easily imitate these kinds of negative behaviors and attitudes. Those who are continually exposed to violence can become desensitized to it and less able to distinguish between acceptable and destructive or hurtful behavior.

TV's effect on children is especially subtle. The images on TV slowly shape the way they think and feel about themselves and others. Many TV shows, even cartoons and children's shows, are filled with conflict and violent behaviors. Very young children can't distinguish

between reality and "make-believe." To them, everything is real. They may copy behaviors without knowing that they may hurt themselves or others. As they grow older, they often idolize their favorite TV characters, wanting to look, act, and talk like whomever they consider "cool."

Exposure to violence, especially in the home, greatly affects children's ability to learn. It creates fear and a sense of powerlessness. These emotions negatively affect children's outlook on life and feeling of well-being, both of which are very important elements in their readiness to learn. Some children grow up in a safe home but live in an unsafe neighborhood. These

children also suffer the negative effects that violence has on learning. Babies may have a harder time learning to trust when their parents and caregivers are fearful of trusting others. As they grow, young children, though eager to learn and explore their surroundings, may have fewer opportunities to venture out, talk to new people, and try new things. These limitations can hinder their development. *(to be continued)*

Editor's Note: Grace Fong is a professor 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. This article is adapted from the Family Resource Kit published by the Center on the Family.

MAINLAND NEWS FEATURE

Who Ordered Ninoy Killed?

by Rodel E. Rodis

After 25 years, the question still remains unanswered: who ordered the assassination of former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino on August 21, 1983?

I previously believed that Ferdinand Marcos was the mastermind because the military timing and precision of the assassination could not have occurred without the knowledge and involvement of Armed Forces Chief Gen. Fabian Ver, who would not have moved without the dictator's knowledge and approval.

But could someone else have been the actual mastermind?

Aside from First Lady Imelda Marcos, who else viewed Ninoy as a rival to succeed Marcos? Let's review the facts.

Ninoy Aquino's plane had just landed in Manila on August 21, 1983 on a flight from Taipei when Philippine soldiers entered the plane and headed directly for Ninoy placing him under their custody and control. The soldiers hustled him through the crowded aisle and out the airport door, which they immediately shut to prevent anyone from following them to a side staircase.

A few seconds later, shots were fired and Ninoy's lifeless body lay on the concrete tarmac of

the Manila International Airport. About 16 soldiers (no officers) were later charged with conspiring to kill Ninoy.

"The forensic evidence submitted to the trial court," columnist Antonio Abaya wrote, "established that the trajectory of the fatal bullet was forward, downward and medially. The bullet entered Aquino's skull near his left ear and exiting at his chin. This was consistent with the gun being fired at Aquino by someone behind him who was at a higher plane than he was, such as someone who was one or two steps behind him on a downward flight of stairs."

Rolando Galman, the hapless patsy brought by his military handlers through tight security at the airport, was positioned at the foot of the staircase. After Ninoy was shot one from behind, the soldiers pointed their assault rifles at Galman and shot him several times to make sure he was dead.

A military van then appeared on the tarmac and the soldiers quickly loaded Ninoy's body on to the van which sped over to a military camp. Some time passed before Ninoy's body was delivered to a coroner for examination.

Barely eight hours later, Marcos announced to the world that "communist hit man" Rolando Galman had killed Ninoy Aquino.

But no one believed Marcos and a fact-finding commission he formed in response to world outrage determined that 16 soldiers were responsible and they were so charged before a trial court. After the 16 soldiers were convicted of conspiracy in the killing of Ninoy and sentenced to Muntinglupa

Documentary on Aquino Assassination Shown in San Francisco

THE WORLD PREMIERE of a stirring feature-length video documentary entitled "Beyond Conspiracy: 25 Years After the Aquino Assassination" was held on August 21, 2008 at the Veterans War Memorial Building in San Francisco.

Prior to the airing of the documentary, dozens joined in a candlelight vigil and march in front of San Francisco's City Hall across the Civic Center Plaza.

The premiere of the film, which was produced by the Foundation for Worldwide People Power, was sponsored by the Nino Aquino Movement. The director of the video was award-winning documentarist Butch Nolasco. The script was written by award-winning writer Ben Tangco.

The producers wanted to provide an accurate and comprehensive account of events leading to and following Ninoy's assassination through a comprehensive review of key eyewitness accounts and vital evidence using competent and independent-minded forensic experts. The documentary combines painstaking research with state-of-the-art CGI (computer generated imaging) technology to recreate Ninoy's assassination accurately from angles that were never before viewed from.

Producers also hoped to convey to Filipinos the hideousness of the murder and of the larger injury inflicted on the nation by the failure to give Ninoy justice and to punish the real perpetrators of the crime.

"I can tell you that this 90-minute documentary is informative, dramatically presented and emotionally charged," wrote Butch Hernandez of the Philippine Daily Inquirer in a recent column.

penitentiary, one of them, Pablo Martinez, became a born-again Christian and decided to confess and reveal what the other soldiers would not.

In his affidavit, Martinez revealed that he was assigned by Col. Romeo Ochoco, to escort Galman from a hotel near the airport to the tarmac, to await the arrival of Ninoy from Taipei. Martinez said that Galman confided to him during the time they were together that Danding Cojuangco was the brains behind the operation.

Witnesses at the Agrava Fact-Finding Commission had previously identified Goscuro, along with Air Force Col. Arturo Custo-

dio and two others, as the men who fetched Galman from his home in San Miguel, Bulacan, on August 17, 1983.

Martinez had previously served under Col. Ochoa, who personally recruited him for the special assignment. Martinez wrote that he and Galman were briefed on the assassination plans at the Carlton Hotel near the domestic airport on the night of August 20, 1983. Briefing them on the details of the plot were Gen. Romeo Gatan, Col. Romeo Ochoco and Herminio Gosoico, a Nueva Ecija businessman closely associated with Danding Cojuangco.

On the morning of August 21,

(continued on page 13)

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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Two House Bills (H.R. 5924 and H.R. 5882) that were introduced to ease the retrogression of immigrant visas numbers were approved by the Subcommittee on Immigration last August 1.

H.R. 5924, sponsored by Representative Robert Wexler on April 29, 2008, would provide additional visas for nurses and physical therapists. H.R. 5882 sponsored on April 23, 2008 by Rep. Zoe Lofgren seeks to recapture unused employment-based and family-based visa numbers.

These bills are now with the

Bills to Ease Visa Backlogs Approved by Immigration Subcommittee

full House Judiciary Committee for review.

Although these bills are considered "stop gap measures", they provide a gleam of hope to hundreds of thousands who are currently waiting and/or intending to apply for immigrant visas.

More Visas for RNs and PTs

If passed, H.R. 5924 will provide an additional 20,000 visas for Registered Nurses and Physical Therapists every year for three years or until September 30, 2011. Their immediate family members will be allowed to immigrate without being subject to the quota limitation.

Under this bill, the USCIS will be required to fast-track its review and act on the immigrant visa petition (I-140) within 30

days from filing. The I-140 petition is the first step in the green card process.

A fee of \$1,500 for each nurse who uses the visa will be charged to the employer except when the employer was affected by the Katrina disaster or is located in a Health Professional Shortage Area.

The fees collected will be used to fund a grant program designed to help nursing schools all over the U.S. attract and/or retain students and faculty members.

This bill has wide support. In a letter written to the sponsors last May 16, the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the American Society for Healthcare Human Resource Administration (ASHHRA) stressed the urgent need for nurses because "the na-

tion's severe nursing shortage, now in its ninth year, challenges the hospitals' ability to operate at full capacity to care for communities."

AHA has 5,000 member hospitals and other health care organizations while ASHRA represents 3,200 health care human resource managers. Both organizations offered their resources to help enact the legislation.

Recapture of Unused Visas

If passed, H.R. 5882 will recapture employment-based and family-sponsored immigrant visas lost due to government processing delays and prevent loss of these visas in the future. It will add to the fiscal year's 140,000 employment-based quota and 480,000 fam-

ily-sponsored visas, the previous year's unused visas and the number of unused visas from the fiscal years 2002 to 2007.

Under existing laws, green cards already authorized by Congress but remained unused were lost because there is no system which will preserve these unused green cards.

Under H.R. 5882, these unused green cards will be re-stored and again be available for use by U.S. employers to retain their foreign workers/employees and also allow families of U.S. citizens and permanent residents a faster reunion with their relatives.

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

Philippine Fruit Bat Among Top 10 Newly Discovered Animals

The International Institute for Species Exploration at Arizona State University recently released its list of the Top 10 new species for 2008. Coming in at number six was a fruit bat from the Philippines.

The bat, with the scientific name *Styloctenium mindorensis*, is found only on the Philippine island of Mindoro. The large and charismatic fruit bat was first discovered and named after Alfred Russel Wallace, a colleague of Charles Darwin.



Researchers remained skeptical of the species' existence until a live specimen was unexpectedly found in February 2006. The bat was unintentionally caught in a net used for surveying local fauna. S.

mindorensis is the 74th chiropteran species to be found in the Philippines and the country's 26th endemic one.

While no population studies has been done so far on the species, it may be threatened by hunting and habitat loss due to the general deforestation of forests on Mindoro. Along with other large pteropods on the island, the bat is hunted by the locals for use as food. Because of such threats, the species may be at risk of extinction.

MAINLAND NEWS FEATURE

(cont. from page 12)

1983, just before Martinez brought Galman to the airport, Galman's mistress, Anna Oliva, and her sister, Catherine, were brought to the Carlton Hotel to have breakfast with Galman. The two women were last seen at their workplace on September 4, 1983 when armed men picked them up. Their corpses were later exhumed from a sugarcane field in Capas, Tarlac in 1988 in a hacienda reportedly owned by Danding Cojuangco.

Galman's wife, Lina Lazaro, was picked up at her home by two men on January 29, 1984 and was never seen again. During the Agrava Fact-Finding inquiry, Gosoico was identified by Galman's son and stepdaughter as one of the two men who picked up their mother.

Despite all the testimonies implicating them, neither Col. Ochocho, Gen. Gatan or Gosoico were ever charged with involvement in the conspiracy to kill Ninoy.

Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's current Justice Secretary, Raul Gonzalez, was a Sandigan-

bayan prosecutor under Cory Aquino when he came upon a witness with crucial evidence who was willing to testify under certain conditions. Gonzalez went to President Cory in Malacanang to inform her that the witness wanted protection for herself and her three kids before she would testify. But before Cory would agree to the terms, she asked who the witness would name as the mastermind.

When Gonzalez answered that she would name her first cousin, Danding Cojuangco, Pres. Cory responded "Impossible! It cannot be!" She refused the demand of the witness, who eventually disappeared.

Gen. Romeo Gatan died of a heart ailment at an unspecified date. Hermie Gosoico died under mysterious circumstances leading Abaya to ask: "Did he die of illness or accident, or was he eliminated because he knew too much?"

Of the original conspirators named by Martinez, only Col. Ochocho is still alive, reportedly living with his family somewhere in Stockton, California.

GLOBAL NEWS

South Korea Extends Foreign Workers' Stay to 5 Years

Foreign workers in South Korea, including Filipinos, will be allowed to work for up to five straight years, up from three years, without taking the compulsory one-month vacation outside the country.

Luis Cruz, the Philippines' ambassador to South Korea, said the extension was made following complaints from foreign workers over the cost of the one-month trip. Businesses also complained about work disruptions.

The new rule also increases employers' odds of hiring bet-

ter-qualified employees. Under the previous system, employers selected among workers who passed a Korean language test without rigorous screening. But now, a new list will show each jobseeker's qualifications and employment history. Employers will also be able to recruit directly via overseas interviews.

In order to prevent workplace exploitation, foreign workers will be allowed to transfer to other companies should their wages be delayed or if their employer violates Korean labor laws. The previous

employment permit system (EPS) limited the transfer of workers to factory closures or worksite abuse.

Last April, a total of 377,032 foreigners were working under the EPS. About 75 percent of them were employed by companies with less than 30 employees.

As of December 2007, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas placed the number of Filipinos in South Korea at 80,715. Of that number, 6,187 are permanent residents, 62,528 are temporary workers and 12,000 are classified as irregular. (philfortune.com)

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BAHAGHARI



ni Elynia S. Mabanglo

Kamangha-manghang tanawin ang "Ifugao Rice Terraces" ng Lalawigan ng Bulubundukin sa Isla ng Luzon. Itinuring itong isang himala, isang kagila gilalas na likha ng katutubong inhinyerya. May hagdang-hagdang palayan din naman sa Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam at iba pang pook sa Gitnang Asya ngunit walang sinlaki, sinta at singhaba nito. Labintatlong libong (13,000) talampakan ang taas nito sa ibabaw ng dagat. At kung pagkasama-samahan ang awak, aabot sa 20,000 kilometro ang haba. Patuloy parin ito sa pagtatanim at pag-aani ng palay kaya nananatiling kamangha-mangha. Sabi, pati ang binhi at paraan ng pagtatanim ng palay ay lihim na ipinamana sa mga taga-Bulubundukin. Ito ang kanilang kuwento.

Sang-ayon sa matatandang taga-Banaue, parang paraiso ang bayan noon. Sagana ang lahat. Nagkakatusak ang isda sa ilog, namumutikit sa bunga ang mga puno at maamo ang mga hayop kaya hindi na kailangang mangaso. Kung gusto raw kumain ng bigas,

Kuwentong Ifugao: Hagdang-hagdang Palayan ng Banaue

puputol lang ng kawayan at may lutong kanin na sa mga bytes.

Anupa't walang hihilingin ang tao. Walang kagutuman. Walang pangangailangan. Ngunit dahil sa kanilang kasaganaan, nakalimot sila. Pinarusahan sila sa pamamagitan ng walang tigil na pagulang naging sanhi ng baha.

Lumbog ang lahat dahil sa baha. Dalawang tao lang ang nakaligtas – ang magkapatid na Wigan at Bugan. Si Wigan ay napadpad sa Bundok na Kalawitan. Sa Bundok naman ng Amuyao nakarating si Bugan. Gutum na gutom si Wigan. Nais niyang magluto ngunit walang apoy. Sa malayong bundok ng Amuyao, natatanaw niya ang liwanag. Sapagkat pahupa na ang baha, nalangoy niya ang kabilang bundok.

Nagkita silang magkapatid, kapwa nasiyahan. Nalaman nilang walang natira sa kanilang tribo kaya nagsama sila bilang mag-asawa. Nagkaanak sila na nagkapangasawahin din kaya nang lumaon, dumami ang tao.

Lumipas ang maraming tao. Isa sa mga inapo nina Wigan ay Bugan, si Kabagan, ang nagtanim ng palay sa dalisdid ng bundok. Nagpakita sa kanya ang bathalang si Kabunian. "Isa kang mabuting tao. Gagantimpalaan ko ang iyong mabuting gawain. Kung susundin mo ang aking mga tagubilin, pagpapalain ka ng

mga Bathala."

Hindi natakot si Kabagan. Sa halip, tumatag siya. "Ano ang nais mong gawin ko, dakilang Kabunian?"

"Sabihin mo sa mga tao na magdaos ng Kanyaw (celebrasyon). Ipagdiwang nila ako sa loob ng tatlong araw na singkad – araw at gabi. Kapag nasiyahan ako sa inyong pagdiriwang, pauunlarin ko ang inyong tribo," sagot ni Kabunian.

Hindi nagdalawang si Kabunian. Agad pinuntahan ni Kabagan ang pinuno ng tribo at ipinagbigay-alam ang kanyang narinig. Hindi naman sila nag-aksaya ng panahon. Ipinatupad ang isang seremonya para kay Kabunian na tatagal sa loob ng tatlong araw. Pagkatapos ng Kanyaw, dinalaw ni Kabagan ang kanyang taniman ng palay.

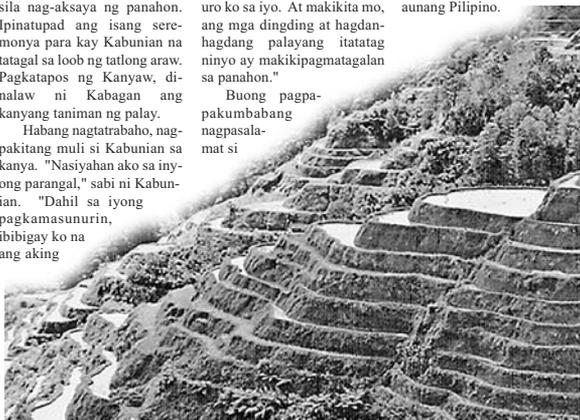
Habang nagtatrabaho, nagpakitang muli si Kabunian sa kanya. "Nasiyahan ako sa inyong parangal," sabi ni Kabunian. "Dahil sa iyong pagkamasunurin, ibibigay ko na ang aking

gantimpala. Bibigyan kita ng mga tudling ng palay na kung tawagin ay inbagar. Kinuha ito sa isang mahiwagang batis. Itanim mo sa iyong tumana. Dapat laging puno ng tubig ang tumana. Walang oras na mawawalan ito ng tubig. Magtayo ka ng dike sa paligid ng iyong taniman. Gamitin mo ang mga batong buhay na nasa paligid at ang malapot na putik." Itinuro pa ni Kabunian ang mga bato at putik na gagamitin ni Kabagan.

At bago umalis, idinagdag pa ni Kabunian: "Hala, sundin mo ang utos ko. Ituro mo sa mga katrimo mo ang mga itinuro ko sa iyo. At makikita mo, ang mga dingding at hagdang-hagdang palayang itatatag ninyo ay makikipagmatagalan sa panahon."

Buong pagpapakumbabang nagsasalamat si

Kabagan. "Salamat po, Bathalang Kabunian." At itinayo niya ang mga dike ayon sa tagubilin bago niya sinuksukan ng mga tudling ng palay. Pagkaraan, tinawag niya ang kanyang mga kapitbahay at tinuruan ng gagawin. Nagsigaya na ang iba pa hanggang ang buong Ifugao ay matalikupan ng mga baiting na ngayon ay ipinagmamalaking taniman ng palay na itinayo may 2,000 taon na nakalilipas. Galing ang kagandahang ito sa mga bathala, ngunit mga mamayan ang katulong sa paglikha. Isang tunay na obra maestra, patunay ng henyo ng mga sinaunang Pilipino.



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By Elynia S. Mabanglo

Agosto, 2008

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Sa sinapupunan nina Wigan at Bugan
Pangarap kang nagsimpan
Dinakila ng panahon at kapaligiran.

Kaluluwa kang nagbabantay
Sa aming pagdarasal
Inukit sa dalisdid, sa Bathala'y inialay.

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