

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

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CRISIS, DANGER, AND OPPORTUNITY: FILIPINOS PREPARE FOR 2009

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EDITORIAL

Looking Ahead to 2009

Barely two weeks into the New Year, most Filipinos are cautiously keeping a close watch on their pocketbooks. And for good reason. The economic signs are eerily similar to that of the 1930s and the Great Depression when thousands lost their jobs.

Some are placing their trust in the president-elect to bolster the economy. Though an impressive politician, it will be very difficult for Obama to right the nation's economic ship, given the many variables—political, economic, technological and even meteorological. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke probably will have more influence than Mr. Obama when it comes to the economy.

If there's one thing the president-elect can do, it's to bolster consumer confidence. If Mr. Obama can inspire giddy banks to lend once more and make the average person feel that things will slowly start to turn around—then he will have done very well indeed.

In the meantime, while Filipinos continue to work hard to achieve their dreams and to get ahead in life, we would all do well to remember that happiness is not based on the state of the economy. It is possible to enjoy life to the fullest, even if your wallet isn't as fat as it used to be. So as we continue into the New Year, remember to make the most out of life and out of every opportunity, no matter what happens on Wall Street.

Issues Facing City, State Lawmakers for 2009

Of you haven't yet done so, you may want to circle January 21, 2009 in your calendar—the opening of the Hawaii State Legislature. Thousands of well-wishers will crowd the capitol's halls to greet lawmakers and enjoy the food and festivities. Lobbyists and special interest groups will also be out in force, knocking on doors of Senate President Colleen Hanabusa, House Speaker Calvin Say and other key lawmakers.

Except the mood of the 2009 Legislature to be cautious, especially with our depressed local economy and the looming national economic crisis. The most heated debates will likely involve the state's budget, as non-profits and even local farmers will need significant state assistance to survive the economic downturn.

For the City Council, 2009 will be a pivotal year for transit and wastewater treatment. The deadline for the public to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) for the proposed rail transit system has been extended until February 6, 2009. The extension gives the public more time to review the document, but also seriously jeopardizes the mayor's plan to break ground on the project in late 2009.

Another key issue facing the Council is a recent decision by the EPA to deny the City's request for a variance for the Sand Island and Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plants from full secondary treatment. The City would be forced to spend over \$1 billion to upgrade both facilities. Oahu's taxpayers will be paying the lion's share of the upgrades in the form of increased sewer fees. Given the state of our faltering economy, the EPA's decision is not only a bad one, but also could not have come at a worse time.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Happy New Year! Welcome to the Chronicle's first issue of 2009. What a ride it was for 2008! We have successfully tackled the many difficulties of the past year and we are eager and committed to meet the new challenges facing us this coming year. We thank God for His abundant blessings and we are grateful to our faithful readers and advertisers for their unwavering support. We resolve to try to improve and to work even harder to serve our community.

No doubt 2009 will severely test all of us. We are in the midst of an economic downturn the breadth and depth of which remain unclear and undefined. What is happening in our local communities and in our country affects us directly and it is but natural that we focus our attention to these problems. Yet the current crisis is also international in scope and global in scale.

Meanwhile, the State of Hawaii is bracing for a significant slowdown in tourism and construction, two industries with traditionally strong Filipino representation. This will be a very difficult year for most of us. But Filipinos, especially immigrants, are resilient and being no strangers to adversity, will survive. Each of us, as individuals, will be affected differently. And as we struggle with our on personal dilemmas, we must not lose sight of our collective long range goals as a group and together we must continue to plan for the future. Our cover story—Crisis, Danger and Opportunity: Filipinos Prepare for 2009 by Danny De Gracia II offers practical ideas on how Filipinos can continue to grow and prosper as a community in the next 100 years.

What lies ahead is anybody's guess. Yet there is a light at the end of the long dark tunnel. That light is none other than Filipino courage, optimism and the ability and willingness to change with the changing times. And by working and staying together as a community we can turn that light into a bright raging bonfire of hope.

Until next issue, Aloha and *Mabuhay!*



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MAYOR'S COLUMN



By Mayor Mufi Hannemann

Working Together to Meet Challenges in the New Year

blocks, but there is still much room to grow, and we must remain committed to ensuring that opportunities are created and sustained as we face the future together.

As I explained in my January 2 inauguration speech, the City and County of Honolulu is retrenching in preparation for a decline in real estate values and a commensurate drop in the property tax revenues that are the City's primary source of income to underwrite everything from police and fire services to sewer repairs and road repaving.

It would be so easy to throw our hands up in the air or resort to finger-pointing and blaming others for these problems. There's so much gloom-and-doom that there seems to be a feeling of defeatism, a loss of hope that I believe is even more harmful than the condition of our economy.

But problems are not as important as solutions. And our people have the mana'ō, the talent, the skills, the energy, and the creativity to over-



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come any obstacles or impediments on our way.

My team and I look forward to further strengthening our close relationship with the Filipino community as we move forward with rail transit and transit-oriented development in communities such as Waipahu and Kalihi, which have so much potential. Our rail project promises to be a great boon to our economy during these hard times, providing thousands of jobs and spurring new development in long-neglected areas.

The rail system will provide a fast, comfortable and

affordable transportation alternative, especially for working people and students, similar to the way the LRT and MRT systems in Manila have made it so much easier to commute along Avenida Rizal and Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA).

We will also continue to strengthen our ties with the Philippines. I was deeply honored last year to be adopted as an Illustrious and Compassionate Son of Badoc, Ilocos Norte, by that municipality's Sangguniang Bayan, or municipal council. I remain very grateful for the warm hospital-

ity extended to myself and Honolulu's delegation when we visited in 2005 to enhance our ties.

We also reaffirmed Honolulu's sister-city relationships with Manila, Cebu, Vigan and Laoag, and I was later declared an honorary son of Vigan and of the Municipality of Bacarra. I look forward to continuing to work with Consul General Ariel Abadilla to further strengthen Honolulu's relationships with communities in the Philippines.

Here at home, I was also very honored to participate in the United Filipino Council of Hawaii Progress Awards and Re-affirmation of Commitment ceremony at the Hilton Hawaiian Village hotel on Oct. 31, where I received the Ating Kaibigan award.

I will continue to support and assist the community in various ways, and I look forward to working together with all our island's residents this year to do the best we can together to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

OPEN FORUM

Working Together for the Good of the Community

By Danny de Gracia, II

Some 233 years ago, a group of men frustrated with unacceptable economic conditions and oppressed by a legalist society got together and declared to the world that they believed "these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." These words define to us the fact that the human experience is supposed to be about life, liberty, and happiness, not defeat, degradation, and disappointment. These words are the covenant which forms the backbone of our government, and they are the foundation of our United States of America. I believe in

this covenant, which is why I believe that the time is now for our generation to rise up and claim life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I believe that we need to be the leaders of a united movement to seize back these blessings not just for ourselves, but for our children and our children's children to come.

First and foremost, we must realize that if we are to be a future, we have to be the leaders. It is time for a rebirth and renaissance of Filipino leadership. We build leaders first and foremost by those in existing authority taking the time to mentor Filipinos and create opportunities for them to employ their existing talents and develop new ones. We also build leaders by laying the foundations of our values, which must always be rooted in integrity, compassion, and love.

Secondly, our leaders have to work to unite, not separate the community. We do this by agreeing that our success and our prosperity are not a matter of left or right but up or down: up to life, or down to degradation. We have to recognize that we cannot sacrifice the ultimate – our children's future – upon the immediate. It may be time for Hawaii Filipinos to hold a leadership summit together to show solidarity and to announce clearly what our issues and values are as a compass to steer us.

We need to say that we will not stand by and let our great community destroy itself under mediocre leadership that drifts from one crisis to the next, eroding our will and purpose. We deserve better, and its time to stand united in our resolve to do something about it.

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Crisis, Danger, and Opportunity: Filipinos Prepare For 2009

By Danny de Gracia, II

John F. Kennedy once observed that when written in Chinese, the word "crisis" is composed of two characters, one meaning danger, the other meaning opportunity. As Filipinos begin the new year, crisis, danger, and opportunity abound.

According to the International Monetary Fund, the world is experiencing "the most dangerous shock" that financial markets have seen since the 1930s, and is on the verge of a global recession which, many believe, is inescapable despite frantic measures by governments and banking institutions alike to avert it. In the Philippines, the National Statistics Office reported last month that 2.5 million are now unemployed, an increase of 6.8 percent. In the United States, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated in December that 91,000 jobs were lost in retail trade; 85,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing; 82,000 in construction; 76,000 in leisure and hospitality; 150,000 in accommodation and food services; and 101,000 in professional and business services. Filipinos were hit especially hard as the same report indicated that the number of Asian Americans without work has increased to

343,000. In addition to a weakening economy, Filipinos are still faced with challenges in the areas of under representation in government, stagnation in upward social mobility, preserving a cultural identity in America, as well as security and safety concerns as the global War on Terror enters its eighth year. Many Filipinos can't help but wonder: are the best days ahead, or behind us?

The Economy

Abroad, numerous countries are implementing or considering the implementation of massive tax cuts to save their economies. In the Philippines, while only four years earlier national leaders were looking to increase taxes to procure higher revenues, today there are plans to cut the corporate income tax from 35% to 30% to help the private sector retain more employees, encourage investment, and in the words of Ralph Recto, Secretary of Socioeco-



nom Planning, make the Philippines "more competitive in the long term". In the People's Republic of China — one of the last remaining bastions of communism after the Cold War ended nearly two decades ago — a tax cut amounting to \$17.5 billion U.S. dollars (120 billion yuan) is likewise being considered for corporations. Here at home, a growing number of individuals believe that our national and local leaders should follow the rest of the world and reduce taxes to help ameliorate our economic crisis.

"The macroeconomic model known as the Laffer Curve teaches us that there is an optimal point of taxation, beyond which people and businesses produce less, revenues fall, and economies cool," said Sarah Hunt, host of the new local television talk show Better Government. "I believe that the [state legislature] should pay specific attention to this notion, seeing that we have some of the highest taxes in the country. We even place a tax on food and medicine! I think it resides in the interest of the people of Hawaii to pay more attention to what goes on at the State legislature and start holding their elected officials accountable. Somewhere down the line, legislators started reflecting their own self interests and not of that for which they represent."

Jamie Story, president of

the Grassroot Institute, an Oahu based public policy think tank, believes that low taxes is an important part of a healthy economy. "Members of the Filipino Caucus and all state legislators in general should work to repeal taxes and place a freeze on new spending in the 2009 legislative session," Story commented. "Taxpayers, small business owners, and families all need tax relief now more than ever. Economic stimulus or bailout packages don't remedy the poor economic situation, in fact they exacerbate it by increasing government debt and taxes, which take money from taxpayers when they need it most and cause the money we do have to lose value."

Grassroot Institute, which conducted a simulation last year to determine the effects of the increase in Hawaii's General Excise Tax, or GET, released a policy brief in October 2008 in which it was projected that some 6,054 local jobs could be lost as a result in 2009. By 2010, the same study suggests that there could be a decrease in private investment by \$159 million, a decrease in personal income by \$360 million, and a decrease in disposable income by \$765 million all as a result of the 0.5% GET increase.

"Employers are forced to lay off workers because of decreased business and increased taxes, and families have fewer

resources to spend on necessities like food and clothing," Story noted. "Instead, members of the Filipino Caucus should take the lead by proposing tax relief along with cuts in wasteful spending — that will allow struggling families to keep more of their hard earned dollars in these difficult economic times."

Rep. Lynn Finnegan, House Republican Leader and member of the Filipino Caucus, also expressed her concern for how the economic crisis affected jobs. "The economic downturn is going to particularly hit the Filipino community as it affects tourism and construction," Finnegan said. "We need to keep people working as we move towards diversifying the economy."

The economic slump has hit more than just jobs in Hawaii — while no one will argue the fact that Hawaii is one of the most romantic places for lovers, the state has seen a drop in the number of marriages. Last year, the Office of Health Status Monitoring reported that there were 19,728 weddings in the state of Hawaii, down from 27,340 in 2007, 28,681 in 2006, and 29,272 in 2005. In case you're wondering if that has any impact on population, birth rates are also down, with 14,472 live births in 2008 compared to 19,119 last year. That fewer people are choosing to get mar-



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COVER STORY

ried in Hawaii and less children are being brought into the world should concern more than just advocates of the traditional family; it is sign that our society is in trouble.

Governor Linda Lingde's administration is presently implementing a recovery strategy which includes a capital improvement plan of \$1.8 billion dollars raised from private developers and bond financing to 1,521 statewide projects in an effort to stimulate the local construction industry — which contributes approximately \$2.5 billion to Hawaii's gross domestic product — in hopes of circulating additional dollars into the economy.

"Improving our economic outlook will continue to be a major focus in 2009," Governor Lingde told the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. "Just as Hawaii's families and businesses are taking steps to overcome current economic challenges, my administration continues to work proactively with our partners in the private, public and non-profit sectors to stimulate the economy and create jobs as part of our five point action plan."

"At the same time, we are also focused on implementing measures to ensure that our economy emerges stronger over the long-term," the Governor went on to say. "This includes transforming our economy away from land development to one that capitalizes on the innovation capacity of our residents.

We are accomplishing this by developing our workforce to create that people have the education, skills and knowledge needed to compete successfully in the global economy, especially in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM education. In addition, we continue to increase Hawaii's energy independence by replacing our over reliance on imported oil with clean, renewable, indigenous sources of energy."

"Like the Filipino business community, our Administration is taking action to improve our local economy for all the people of Hawaii," Lt. Governor James Aiona commented. "The central tenet of our five-point economic action plan is to preserve and create jobs, while remaining focused on the long-term transformation of our economy toward energy security and innovation. The private sector has been the driving force in overcoming past economic challenges, and



this time will be no different. Everyone has a role to play in making Hawaii better."

The Filipino Experience

Another continuing challenge that faces our people is the challenge of simply being Filipino. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Filipinos have struggled to find cultural understanding, leadership representation, success, and most of all, a place of respect in America. A considerable amount of the American experience for Filipinos has been focused, not surprisingly, here in Hawaii. When famed Pablo Manlapit came to Hawaii as a plantation worker with the Hamakua Mill Company in 1909, he and others like him faced abusive labor, discrimination, restrictions on marriage, and were locked into an almost static social structure which offered no upward mobility beyond that of a laborer.

One hundred years later and at an estimated population of four million, Filipino Americans are now found in nearly every industry and every part of the United States, from agricultural laborers in Hawaii to political appointees in the White House. Much progress has been made by Filipinos in recent years, but there are many in the Filipino community who say that Filipinos still have a ways to go and that Filipinos must seek to take more active roles in America while continuing to hold fast to their immigrant roots. While lunas and powerful plantation masters are a thing of the past, many Filipinos still struggle with feelings of inferiority, cultural awkwardness, language limitations from English as a second language and the perceptions of being locked into certain career paths.

Dr. Belinda Aquino, Director of the Center for Philippine

Studies at the University of Hawaii is proud of the progress Filipinos have made, and hopes that the younger generation can build upon that legacy through a continuing consciousness and narrative of the Filipino experience. "I am quite pleased with the progress and social advancement that Filipinos have made in Hawaii since they arrived a hundred years ago. The fact is there was no real Filipino community then with families, children, resources, et cetera, just scattered populations in various plantations where Filipino sakadas toiled from morning till night without benefit of further education, upward mobility or economic advancement," Dr. Aquino said. "What can be done in the next 100 years? As in all histories, the next stage is to build on the gains and achievements of the first century."

Teresita Bernales, coordinator of the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council's International Visitor Program said that "To ensure success and prosperity for Filipinos for the next 100 years, we need to think out of the box.

"To ensure success and prosperity for Filipinos for the next 100 years, we need to think out of the box. We need to get out of our comfort zone and seek greater participation in social, political and economic activities of the larger community. We need more Filipinos in local and national government leadership positions."

—Dr. Teresita Bernales

We need to get out of our comfort zone and seek greater participation in social, political and economic activities of the larger community. We need more Filipinos in local and national government leadership positions. There are a total 23% Filipinos and mixed Filipinos according to the Hawaii 2000 census. At the minimum, we should have 23% representation in local and state government, including business and education sectors."

Rep. Kimberly Marcos Pine, whose family roots trace back to Hawaii's plantation days echoed that "Filipinos need to strive to be part of the leadership structure in Hawaii. When I was trying to help the Governor get Filipinos into boards and commissions, despite our efforts to advertise it, few Filipinos responded, and I think that's something that as a group we should strive for. I personally would like to get more involved in getting Filipinos to see themselves as powerful leaders."

Virgil Gabriel offered that "Over the years, Filipinos have risen from manual laborers to

the highest echelon of Hawaiian society and politics. There are many prominent Filipinos in the medical, legal, technological and political fields. To ensure success and prosperity, we need to aspire to get the best education; aspire to reach for higher learning; reach out for the stars — be doctors, lawyers and engineers; be an integral part of the whole, not only to the Filipino community, but to the rest of multi-racial America."

Dr. Aquino shared that for 2009, the number one accomplishment she wants to see for the Filipino community would be "the pulling together of the community for some real accomplishments, similar to the Filipino Centennial in 2006, not just in celebratory form but in producing world-class achievers in the professions."

One way that Filipinos could possibly promote the collective objective of greater influence and success is to aggressively mentor the upcoming generation and also to keep the door of opportunity

(continued on page 10)



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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

Opening Day

The Twenty-fifth Session of the Legislature will begin on Wednesday, January 21, 2009.

Opening Day is marked by a public ceremony followed by festivities welcoming residents the public to participate in the lawmaking process. This year I plan to introduce several corrections bills to enhance the ability of the Department of Public Safety to monitor non-violent offenders in more cost-effective ways to protect community safety while reducing the budget, as well as to increase rehabilitative and re-integration efforts so that when prisoners have completed their sentences they are better able to live a productive life on the outside. The economy, sus-

A New Beginning

tainability, and energy are likely to rise to the top of priorities this Session. I will also be introducing legislation to help our economy through bills that promote small business, double the fuel efficiency of new cars sold in the future, and reduce the energy use of new appliances to help our consumers keep their utility costs down.

The Next First Lady

Should the First Lady be allowed to hold an outside job to maintain family income or should she be paid for performing her functions as hostess of the White House? That's the thought-provoking question I saw recently on CNN.

The question arises because Michele Obama will be another First Lady to have had her own career prior to occupying the White House. The first, of course, was Hillary Rodham, better known as Hillary Clinton.

A native Chicagoan, Hillary Rodham is a prominent attorney in her own right, being twice named as one of 100 most influential lawyers in America be-

fore her husband became a household name. She had been a director of Wal-Mart and several other corporations. Her concern for child welfare expressed itself in tireless effort given to the many organizations she served. That top lawyer Hillary Rodham became traditional First Lady Hillary Clinton on the steps of the White House caused small controversy, because her independent status was something new in politics. She, of course, gave up her career and performed all of the social duties that customarily fall to the wife of the president. As the primary salary earner of her family throughout most of the Clinton's marriage, though, she also gave up her income for eight years.

Fellow Chicagoan Michele Obama, like Hillary Clinton, is the primary breadwinner of her family. While the Clintons graduated from Yale Law School, the Obamas went to law school at Harvard. The Obamas, as the Clintons did before them, will be entering the White House in their 40s. If Michele gives up her post as a health care executive, the Obama family will be giving up the comfortable income she earned.

Rosalynn Carter did the accounting for the family peanut business and gave it up when Jimmy Carter became Governor of Georgia. Nancy Reagan was an actress under the name Nancy Davis (her real name is Anne Robbins). Laura Bush was a teacher and librarian. Pat Nixon and Barbara Bush were traditional political spouses.

The First Lady's social duties are tremendous and customarily done without financial



The Obamas

remuneration. She assists the President in receiving foreign dignitaries, industry and government leaders, and other visitors, as well as hosting and attending numerous events. As informal diplomats, they represent the U.S. abroad. Pat Nixon visited roughly 80 countries, and was the first to enter a combat zone. Hillary Clinton's many travels and meetings with heads of state gave her the comfort and familiarity that will serve her well as our next Secretary of State. All of these engagements create a demanding schedule for the First Lady.

When not attending to hostess responsibilities, the First Lady traditionally devoted time to charitable causes, using her high profile to focus attention on issues most important to her.

Women who marry politicians are aware of the extra demands, compromises required, and sacrifice of a private, "normal" life required of the spouse of a public official. The role of First Lady is demanding, no doubt, but as a country, we have up to now expected these duties to be performed without a paycheck. Yes, the President is paid an annual salary for being the leader of the free world, but even for the presidency, we have customarily viewed politics as a career based on commitment to public service, where the privilege of setting and directing policy, not money, is the primary reward.

Being the First Lady is a distinguishing honor shared by only 43 other women in our nation's history. First Ladies have the privileges of being in the midst of history in the making, and through advising her husband, of having some influence over the course of events and policy affecting our country and the world around us. Her ability to advocate for causes and to meet world and domestic leaders, as well as the many opportunities opened up to her, her husband and family, have all been customarily considered to be the quid pro quo for the social responsibilities that she performs.

Is the great privilege of enjoying the unique experience of being the official occupant of the White House and all that comes with it, sufficient compensation for the duties of the First Lady, or must there be also a paycheck as well? The question CNN posed about the First Lady is food for thought.

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IMMIGRATION GUIDE

Gnawing at Immigration Clients in the Year of the Rat



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

2008 is the Year of the Rat, according to the Chinese Zodiac calendar. For most people, they are glad that the year is almost over. They hope that 2009, the Year of the Ox, will be better.

The word "rat" is derived from the Latin word "rodere" (to gnaw). It means, among others, "a contemptible person".

People born in the Year of the Rat are believed to be "intelligent" but "cunning" and "highly ambitious and unapologetic promoters of their own agendas, which often include money and power." Rats are said to be found in various professions, including politics and law.

What a pity that so many immigration clients have been gnawed at by some lawyers asking exorbitant fees.

Take the case of a Hawaii petitioner whose husband was

denied a visa for lack of a petitionable relationship. She contacted a California immigration lawyer she saw on television. She was told that the fee would be \$20,000. She and her family visited a GI lawyer in Hawaii and asked what would be a reasonable fee. About \$2,000, they were told. They left but returned a few days later and asked if he would handle the case for \$2,000. "So, you have already canvassed other lawyers. How much were they asking?" the GI lawyer asked them. "More than \$2,000," they replied.

A Filipino couple in Hawaii said that they had hired the same California lawyer for an adjustment of status case. He charged them \$6,000 each for a total of \$18,000 for the couple and their minor child. They felt frustrated that they were not even allowed to see the lawyer, much less talk to him. They went to see the GI lawyer and asked what he would charge for an adjustment of status case for their adult son whom the California lawyer did not want to handle, saying that there was no relief for him. The GI lawyer said: "About \$1,500. And

there is relief available for your son." The couple lamented: "We wish we had seen you first."

A Guy arrived in Hawaii pursuant to his wife's immigrant visa petition. He was shocked to learn that his wife was pregnant by another man. As they say in Ilcoslovakia, he was "torotot" (cuckolded). She was ashamed to see him. He went to a lawyer who charged him \$8,000 to file an I-751 Petition to Remove Conditions on Residence. The Petition was denied because the wife did not sign it and they were not divorced. The guy went to a non-Filipino lawyer. He charged \$12,000 to file another I-751 Petition plus a complaint for divorce. The divorce was granted but the I-751 Petition was denied. Reason: No proof that the marriage was bona fide. The guy was placed in deportation (removal) proceedings. He saw an immigration lawyer on television. He contacted the lawyer who charged him \$15,000 up front. When the guy forwarded the file to the California lawyer, the lawyer told him that the case was difficult and Hawaii was too far. The guy contacted the GI lawyer

who told him that for an I-751 Petition, \$1,000 would be reasonable and for this type of deportation case, a reasonable fee would be between \$7,000 and \$10,000. And, there would be two lawyers representing him -- a white and a brown -- two for the price of one. The guy was so happy and exclaimed that he would pay \$10,000. The lawyer told him to just pay \$7,000. "Thank you," said the guy, "I will give you the rest as a bonus if we win."

There are other cases like these too numerous to mention.

Reasonable Fees

The following are reasonable fees for the most common immigration petitions or cases: Fiancé or Fiancée Petition - \$ 750; Relative (Parent, child, or wife of many years) - \$ 350; Relative (with red flag, e.g., very old man marrying young woman) - at least \$1,000; Illegitimate child - \$ 750; Adopted child - about \$1,000; Affidavit of Support (I-864) - \$400; Adjustment of Status Package (I-485, I-130, I-131, I-864, G-325A for 2, I-751) - about \$1,750; Extension of Stay - about \$700; Removal of Condition on Residence - \$1,000; Naturalization - \$ 400; Certificate of citizenship - \$ 400; Response to: Request for Evidence, Intent to Revoke, or Intent to Deny - \$1,000-\$3,000; Dead Petitioner Humanitarian Reinstatement - \$1,500-\$3,000; Naturalization Appeal (N-336) - \$1,000-\$2,000; Appeal to AAU (I-290B) - \$1,000-\$2,000; Ap-

peal to BIA (EOIR-29) - \$1,000-\$3,000; Removal (Deportation) - about \$250 an hour or from \$4,000 to \$15,000 depending on the nature of the charges and the number of hearings.

TIP: If the lawyer you contacted charges fees significantly more than those indicated above, ask him what is so unusual about your case that would require him to work additional hours to justify the increased fees. Tell the lawyer that you know an experienced lawyer who is willing to handle the case for these amounts and that he has never lost a case nor had a visa petition denied.

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Laogo 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 Unit St. corner N. King, Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96819. Tel. (808) 847 1601. Fax (808) 847 1624. E-Mail: jfilamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. Listen to the most interesting and humorous radio program on Hawaii radio KNDD 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.)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

La Union Circle of Hawaii Elects New Officers

The La Union Circle of Hawaii recently elected Carola Hufana Ader as its third president since its first inception 34 years ago. The officers were installed into office by Consul Paul Cortez who gave a song rendition during the coronation banquet program of the association on January 9 at the Ala Moana Hotel.

Ms. Ader is thrilled to serve the organization and said, "I am encouraged by what we have done in the past and I am committed to continuing what we have done in preserving and perpetuating the association's social and cultural mission."

Ms. Ader is very active in the Filipino community and held several positions as Board of Director of the Oahu Filipino Council of Hawaii and Convention Chair, Secretary of the Philippine Centennial Coordinating Committee 2008, Vice-President of the American Business



PRESIDENT Carola H. Ader
1ST VICE PRESIDENT Conrad Valdez
2ND VICE PRESIDENT Baybee Hufana
RECORDING SECRETARY Edna Ballesteros
ASST. CORRES. SEC. Laureana S. Tadina
TREASURER Fe V. Cablay
ASSISTANT TREASURER Purificacion P. Flores
AUDITOR Ben Pulido

Women's Association, to name a few. She is a medical technologist by profession and is currently a lab supervisor at the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. She is also connected with the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle as a columnist. She is recipient of numerous awards in her profession and in the community.

Other officers to be installed are as follows:

1st Vice Pres. Conrad Valdez, 2nd Vice Pres. Baybee Hufana,

Recording Sec. Edna Ballesteros, Corres. Sec. Teresa Pascua, Asst. Corres. Sec. Laureana Tadina, Treas. Fe Cablay, Asst. Treas. Purificacion Flores, Auditor Ben Pulido, Sgt-at-Arms: Hilario Bumanglag, Isidro Flores, Abundio Cabe, Board of Advisors: Rev. Jaime Galvez, Elisa Joaquin, Dr. Nicmar Joaquin, Felicidad Ventura, Jesse Florendo, Annie Corpuz (P.R.O. & Past Pres.), Honorary Adviser Mito Ablan, Legal Adviser Atty. Ben Dumlaog Martin.

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SOCIETY PAGE



Welcoming the New Year at a private function in Waikiki are (l-r): Karen White, Margaret Berger, Carl Berger, Mel Camat, Susan Matsumoto, Diane Ramos, and Janet Sempliciano



Elvie and Virgil Gabriel pose for the camera before enjoying the delicious foods during a get-together Party with friends



Frank Catalan, Bernie Bernaldes and Dr. Ben Realica during the U.S.T. Alumni Association Christmas Party in Kaneohe



Andy and Nellie Somera at a New Year's Party



The Callo's. Angeli, Stephen, and baby Stephanie. Angela Callo, the new addition to their family



Norman Robert, Dr. Gina Capati, Dr. Elizabeth Abinsay and Sarah Robert at the U.S.T. Alumni Party



Sheryl Bonilla with son Joshua and daughter Adrian



From L-R: Drs. Renato de los Santos and Charlton Lacerna. At the back is Tim Llana



Jun Abinsay, Dr. Teresita Bernaldes, Melba Mariano, Dr. Celia Ona and Lyna Burian during a Holiday celebration



Prudelane and Jessie Nugal, joined the fun while visiting Hawaii from New Jersey during the Holiday Season



Drs. Mercedes and Richard Kua at a New Year's Party celebration



Dr. Nicanor Joaquin and wife Imelda at the backdrop of a gigantic bamboo Christmas decor



Vickie and Yong Bunye at the U.S.T. Alumni Christmas party celebration

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

UST Alumni Association of Hawaii Donates Goods to Gawad Kalinga Residents

The members of the UST Alumni Association of Hawaii recently donated money during their 2008 Christmas party instead of an exchange gift. The funds collected were earmarked to buy foods for the residents of the HIRO/USTA-HAWAII Hawaii

Village in Agudo, Mandaluyong in the Philippines. Jun Abinsay, Gawad Kalinga Hawaii Coordinator, who went to the Philippines during the Christmas holidays bought the foodstuff for this project. For a total of \$235 collected, he bought rice and canned goods. This small act



Jun Abinsay, Gawad Kalinga Hawaii Coordinator, shown here with the residents of the HIRO/USTA-HAWAII Village after a Christmas food distribution. Background shows their completed Gawad Kalinga house

of random kindness was very much appreciated by the recipients. USTA-HAWAII plans to continue this project along with

their continuing fundraising effort to build homes for the Philippines poorest of the poor.

Rep. Lynn Finnegan Selected as Aspen Rodel Fellow

Lynn Finnegan, representing District 32, has been selected as one of the 24 elected officials as a 2008 Class of Fellows by the Aspen Institute's Rodel Fellowships in Public Leadership (AIRFPL). The members were selected based on their reputation for intellect, thoughtfulness and bipartisan approach to governing. The class will convene this month and is evenly comprised of Republicans and Democrats, representing Fellows from 22 states and serving the local and state levels of government.



The AIRFPL program was established in 2005 and works to enhance American democ-

racy by convening the nation's most promising young political leaders in casual, bipartisan setting in order to explore the underlying values and principles of western democracy, the relationship between individuals and community, and the responsibilities of public leadership.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

"SAMA-SAMANG GALING SA PAGSAYAW AT PAG-AWIT" / FRIDAY

January 23, 2009 • 5pm-11pm
 • Open to the Public, Filipino Community Center • Call Tess at 680-0451

PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII 31ST INAUGURAL / SATURDAY

January 31, 2009 • 6pm • Kahala Hotel, Maile Ballroom • Call Tess Bernales at 256-8747

55TH TERNO BALL & 5TH WOMEN ACHIEVERS' AWARDS NIGHT / SATURDAY

March 7, 2009 • Ala Moana Hotel, Hibiscus Ballroom • Contact Lina Longboy (375 0828) or Jo Farina (282 3847)

FILIPINO FIESTA, PARADE AND SANTACRUZAN / SATURDAY

May 9, 2009 • All day starting at 8:00 a.m. • For more information, please call the FilCom Center at 680-0451

FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII INSTALLATION BANQUET / SATURDAY

July 11, 2009 • 6pm • Hilton Hawaiian Village • Call Rose Mendoza at 371-3902 or Bennett Evangelista at 398-5988.

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Queen Kahehuanui Center 808-877-0937 | KAHOOLAWE
Kahala Mall Kiosk 808-734-0250 | OAHU
AIEA Peakridge Center Store 808-484-1242
HONOLULU Kahala Mall Kiosk 808-734-0250 | KANEHOE Windward Mall 808-247-0387
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COVER STORY (CONT.)


The Philippine government's war on terrorism

(from page 5, Crisis...)

open for other Filipinos to pass through. Rebecca Wylie, a young Filipino who graduated last year with an MBA in Operations Management from the University of Michigan and now works for Boeing as a project manager offered a warning that Filipinos should humbly consider: "our biggest challenge is holding on to our cultural identity among successive generations of Filipino Americans."

Terrorism and Security

Without real security at home or abroad, it is arguable that all other considerations are rendered meaningless. While in office, President Ronald Reagan, when faced with the pall of terrorism during the 1980s, reminded Americans that, "Terrorism is the preferred weapon of weak and evil men, and as Edmund Burke reminds us, in order for evil to succeed, it is only necessary that good men do nothing." As a major part of America's ongoing War on Terror involves the Philippines, many Filipinos believe that the new U.S. must continue a strong relationship with the Philippines as a critical part of winning the global war. Contrary to common knowledge, the modern War on Terror has deep roots in the Philippines. Years prior to the infamous attacks against America on 9/11, terrorist Khalid Shaikh Mohammad — once al Qaeda's third highest ranking leader — owned an apartment in Manila and had planned from the Philippines to bomb 11 airliners over the Pacific in 1994, but was foiled at the last minute. And just last year, violence erupting in Mindanao displaced half a million people and sparked concern among security experts and Hawaii Filipinos alike whether the Bangsamoro could align themselves with Muslim extremists and create an incubator for terrorism.

During the November elections, the topic of terrorism and security both at home and abroad was made a major issue by both the McCain and Obama campaigns. With Barack Obama set to be inaugurated on January 20th as the 44th President of the United States, that promise must now become practical application as the War on Terror is inherited by the new administration.

"A lot of hope is hinging on the new administration," Bernales said. "It seems that the Philippines, although regarded as a close ally of the United States, does not get the respect that it deserves. The Philippines

should have a strong voice in Washington about her needs and use her strategic position in the Asia-Pacific region as an important key for peace and security in that region and the world. The security assistance of the Bush Administration ... may have short term impact but we need a long term solution to the Muslim insurgency."

Making the most of 2009: How we can rock the New Year

Despite the crisis inherited from the passing year, Filipinos still have an opportunity to succeed in 2009 at all levels. First and foremost, prosperity must become the number one "Filipino issue" of the year to rally behind. Filipinos must hold their elected local and national leadership responsible for making wise decisions in the area of taxation and government spending policies. Secondly, Filipinos must be willing to remember their cultural roots, strive for success, and step outside of their comfort zones to pursue leadership positions. If Filipinos wish to have a future, they must be in positions of authority to be able to take part in shaping the future. This also means that parents must take a proactive role in ensuring that their children stay in school, develop strong competencies in math, sciences, and the English language, and when possible, pursue higher education in order to be competitive in the job market. Thirdly, Filipinos must learn to cooperate with one another and not self-discriminate. It will take the combined efforts of the community to open doors and to keep doors open for Filipinos. Fourthly, Filipinos must not overlook the fact that in order to enjoy the fruits of their labor, they must have a safe world to live in. Filipinos must support a strong defense for both the United States of America and for the Philippines. Fifth and most importantly, all of our human works aside, Filipinos need to have faith in their dreams, faith in their families, faith in their nation and faith that God will direct all of us from today's challenges to tomorrow's blessings. This is the core of what made our forebears so determined, so persevering, and so successful against all odds.

Can we succeed in 2009? Can we improve the lot of Filipinos both at home here in Hawaii and around the world? Can we enter 2010 stronger, prouder, and more secure? My answer is, as I hope yours will be, not only yes, we can, but indeed, yes, we will.

PHILIPPINE NEWS

BSP: 2009 a Critical Year for RP Economy

By Des Ferriols/Wednesday, January 7, 2008

This year will be critical for the Philippines as it faces a bleaker global financial market as well as recession and volatility in prices, particularly oil. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando Tetangco raised the scenario yesterday at the Tuesday Club forum at the EDSA Shangri-La.

"This year could define how we will perform when the markets turn around," Tetangco said.

He explained that most analyses of the economic developments in the US and other rich countries indicated that the current recession could drag on for about 18 months, or until 2010.

"But no one can say for certain how deep and how long the global downturn would be, or how far the markets would retreat," Tetangco said. "Therefore it is incumbent upon us to brace for more uncertainties."

He said the country should also expect recessions in less-developed economies and for these to affect the Philippines and its trading relationships with the rest of the world.

The BSP's response, Tetangco said, would remain anchored on its inflation-targeting strategy, adding that this tack has allowed the central bank to focus more on its mandate to keep prices stable.

"More specifically, as inflation risks moderate, the BSP will carefully consider opportunities to ensure appropriate levels of market liquidity to maintain confidence," Tetangco said.

Tetangco stressed the BSP would keep inflation at manageable levels to protect real incomes and purchasing power. He said this would create an environment for sustainable long-term growth.

"Specifically, we will beef up reserves for insurance, maintain a market-determined exchange rate

and continuously review of our foreign exchange regulatory policies," he said, referring to BSP's policy on the external sector.

He said that overall, the country ended 2008 on a much better footing than its neighbors and that it has not been affected by the global financial turmoil except in terms of risk-aversion on the part of short-term investors.

"But 2009 would be critical in crafting policy that would allow us to be ready and take advantage of the upturns in the global slowdown when they do materialize," he said.

Tetangco said earlier the full impact of the US economic troubles would be felt in 2009 and that there was risk that the credit crunch in the US could worsen if the proposed bailout packages flounder.

An unsuccessful bailout, he said, could further hurt confidence and eventually US consumption.

Tetangco said the Philippines faces the same risks since

the government is reacting basically in the same manner to the crisis.

The Arroyo administration plans to increase spending this year to prime the economy.

However, budget and finance officials have not clearly shown whether there would be new money coming into the budget. This has shaken market confidence in the feasibility of a pump-priming program.

But Tetangco is optimistic about the success of a stimulus program.

"Fortunately, the domestic banks' exposure to toxic assets is minimal and domestic consumption fueled by OFW remittances is intact," Tetangco said.

Tetangco said he expects the country's macroeconomic prudence to pay off this year considering the buffers built "during good times (were meant) to provide resilience in bad times."

"The pursuit in the past of credible monetary and exchange rate policies, responsible fiscal management, and strengthened financial supervision and regula-

tion has afforded the Philippines some cushion from the ongoing turmoil in the global economy," Tetangco said.

Tetangco said he is optimistic that government actions have been quick and decisive enough to prevent the situation from getting worse.

Tetangco also cited the importance of effective and timely communication and transparency to help shore up market confidence.

"This is manifested most profoundly in terms of better disclosure of bank exposures to troubled financial institutions, banks' institutional arrangements for risk management, and information on the range of underlying assets of structured financial products," he pointed out.

Tetangco said the timely communication to the public of recent developments, policy changes and emerging risks as well as their economic implications would also help reinforce credibility at a time when the market is already in panic mode. (www.philstar.com)

Fitch Ratings Retains 'Stable' Outlook for RP

By Des Ferriols/Wednesday, January 7, 2008

London-based Fitch Ratings has maintained its stable outlook for the Philippines, saying the country is "reasonably healthy" despite the tumult in the global economy.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco said the outlook indicated Fitch's confidence in the Philippines' ability to weather the global slowdown or even recession in the country's major trading partners.

A stable outlook means that the Philippines stays at its current credit ratings until the next Fitch review.

In a television interview, Fitch managing director James McCormack said the Philippines, China and Indonesia are the only countries that are not in Fitch Ratings' negative watch.

Speaking at the weekly Tuesday Club breakfast forum at the EDSA Shangri-La yesterday, Tetangco said Fitch's action reaffirmed the view of monetary officials that the country's external position is strong enough to buttress the economy even amid the global slowdown.

"The Philippines is still reasonably healthy. Public finance is well-managed in the last couple of years," McCormack said.

McCormack said weaker growth in the region was not necessarily negative from a sovereign creditor's perspective.

China, according to McCormack, was still exceptionally well based on its "extremely high" foreign exchange reserves.

The Philippines' reserves may not be as big as China's but its external position is strong.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the country's reserves stood at \$36.2 billion as of November 2008 and Tetangco said authorities expect a further buildup this year.

Tetangco said that even with the anticipated slowdown in foreign short-term investments as well as in exports and remittances, the country's external position would be robust because remittances would still come in and some export sectors might even benefit from the global slowdown, particularly business process outsourcing.

"I think in case of the Philippines, it's been largely left aside in terms of what's going on in international capital markets; and it still benefits from reasonably strong remittance flows," McCormack said.

Remittances would probably suffer but McCormack said the country would remain reasonably healthy.

"Public finance is well-managed in the Philippines in last couple of years," he said. "We don't think it's sustainable in the medium term but I think the recent record has been quite good so the Philip-

pines looks okay."

According to Tetangco, Fitch's action has validated the BSP's view that the country's external position is resilient and healthy. He said the Fitch outlook would boost investor con-

fidence amid the panic that struck the markets last year.

Tetangco said the country has enough foreign exchange buffers despite portfolio outflows because of the adequate reserves built up by the BSP in response to the expected slowdown in investments and exports in 2009. (www.philstar.com)

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March 14, 2009 - Dingrenios Association - Town Fiesta of Dingros

March 21, 2009 - Marcos Town of Hawaii-Tour Fiesta

May 2009 - Mediterranean and Greece tour

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GOVERNOR'S COLUMN



By Gov. Linda Lingie

Five-Point Plan and Proposed Biennium Budget

is to get people in construction and related industries back on the job, bolster our economy and improve residents' quality of life.

We are committed to getting 1,521 projects started within the next 18 months as part of this aggressive effort, which is a key component of my Administration's five-point economic action plan (www.hawaii.gov/gov/economy). Working in partnership with county governments and the private sector, this focus on construction activity will allow us to take control of our destiny at a time when "business as usual" is no longer an option.

In compiling the list, our criterion was to find projects that had already been budgeted and approved by the Legislature and that were ready to start construction within the next 18 months. On O'ahu, this in-

cludes 803 projects worth more than \$1 billion that will preserve and create jobs and address the concerns of residents and businesses about the state of O'ahu's public schools, airports, highways and other public facilities. Project highlights include:

- East Kapolei II – East-West Road (estimated cost: \$19.8 million)
- East Kapolei Phase I, Increment 1, House Construction, 111 Homes, Developer Financed for DHHL (estimated cost: \$28.9 million)
- University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Campus Center Renovation and Expansion (estimated cost: \$25.6 million)
- Interstate Route H-1, Addition and Modification of Freeway Access, Palaiāli Interchange to Makakilo

Interchange (Kapolei Interchange Complex), Phase 1 (estimated cost: \$16.6 million)

To ensure that this effort stays on target, all 1,521 projects statewide are posted on my website

at www.hawaii.gov/cip, where you can track when a project is going out to bid, when the contract will be awarded, what permits are still required, and if additional action is needed by a specific government agency – state, county or federal – to keep the project moving. We are inviting residents and businesses to keep the pressure on us and our partners to resolve any bottlenecks quickly.

In addition to moving forward with infrastructure improvements and other components of our five-point plan, we recently submitted to the State Legislature our proposed biennium budget, culminating a lengthy and in-depth

review of costs and programs by all 18 states departments.

I believe the budget reflects the fiscal discipline that Hawai'i residents expect. It reduces operating costs while preserving essential services to the greatest extent possible. At the same time, it focuses our available resources in areas of long-term importance to the state, like clean energy and education.

This is a time of shared sacrifice for our state. By pursuing collaboration with the private sector and across the political aisle, I am confident our economy will emerge stronger than before.

Please find information on my five-point plan and our proposed biennium budget on my website at www.hawaii.gov/gov. In addition to communicating with your legislators during the upcoming legislative session, please send my office your ideas and feedback at governor.lingie@hawaii.gov.

I hope Filipino Chronicle readers enjoyed a wonderful holiday season. The start of the new year offers us a chance to think about what we would like to achieve in the coming months and how we can work together. A major focus for my Administration is our collaborative capital improvement initiative.

Last month, legislators, construction industry executives, union leaders and our three neighbor island mayors joined me to unveil a sweeping plan to implement more than \$1.8 billion in public infrastructure improvement projects statewide. The goal of this plan

FAMILY CORNER

Managing Family Life

what your goals are, you can start making plans to reach them. As you start to think about goals for yourself and your family, look at your hopes and dreams for your future. They're the inspiration for your goals. Is there something about your dreams that's very specific that you think you can accomplish? It doesn't have to be the whole dream. It could be a portion or one step toward it. It's good to start with something small so you can see results quickly. You're more likely to accomplish your goals if you make them S.M.A.R.T.: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timed.

- Be as SPECIFIC as you can when you state your goal. For example, "I will spend one hour every evening reading and playing with my children" instead of "I want to have more time to relax with my children."
- State your goal in a MEASURABLE way that allows

you to know whether you are getting closer to reaching it or when you have achieved it. For example, "I will walk 30 minutes a day, at least five days a week" instead of "I will exercise."

- Make your goals are ACHIEVABLE. Instead of saying "I hope to have my own business someday," you can say "I will attend a small business management workshop at the community college next weekend."
- Choose goals that are REALISTIC; be sensible and practical. Challenge yourself, but don't make it so hard that you fail before you reach your goal. For example, "I'm going to paint the bathroom walls during my vacation" instead of "I'm going to paint the whole house during my next vacation."
- Have each goal be TIMED with a deadline or a time frame for completion.

Break down longer-term goals into smaller ones that have short-term deadlines. Write down the deadline for reaching the goal and post it where you'll see it often (such as the refrigerator

door). Reward yourself when you meet a deadline. For example, "I'm going to save \$50 a month so that I will have \$600 saved in one year" instead of "I'm going to save money."

Making Plans

Planning involves deciding what needs to be done, when and how it will be done, and who will do what. With all your day-to-day demands, it's probably hard to even think about planning for the future. However, taking time to think ahead can actually help you gain some control over day-to-day demands. For example, if your goal is to prepare a healthy dinner for your family each night, consider planning a week's worth of meals, using items on sale. By checking food ads to plan your meals and by preparing a shopping list, you can make sure you buy all the things you'll need, avoid buying things you don't need, and eliminate the need to make multiple trips to the market. You can use the "saved time" and "saved money" to do other things. And, because you're not deciding what to prepare just before dinnertime, you'll be less rushed and more relaxed.

It makes sense to take time to plan your life carefully. Thinking ahead about the next several years gives you an idea of future demands. It helps you see what resources you'll have or need to meet these demands.

To help make your dreams come true tomorrow, write down what you need to do today. As much as possible, let all family members take part in planning, especially when resources are limited. It's much easier to reach a goal when all family members agree on it and work together to reach it.

You can use the following process to plan how to reach each of your goals:

1. On a sheet of paper, complete the statement, "Our goal is to..."
2. Write down the actions you need to take to reach your goal.
3. Set a deadline for completing each action.
4. Decide what resources you need to carry out each action. If you don't have the needed resources, add "getting the resources" as part of the actions needed.

Carrying Out Plans

Once you have your plan, try to follow it as best you can. Check every so often to see if you're doing things as planned.

(continued on page 15)



By Grace F. Fong

Managing means using what you have to get what you want. It sounds simple, but it's not always easy.

Most people usually have more demands than resources—there's always too much to do and not enough time, money, energy, skills or other resources to do it. It's no wonder that the job of managing daily life can sometimes feel overwhelming. You can, however, take charge by deciding how to use your limited resources more effectively.

Setting Goals

It's very important to first know what you want—to identify your goals. Once you know

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LEGAL NOTES

Crime and Trafficking Victims May Adjust Status



By Reuben S. Seguritan

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) published its interim final rule on December 12, 2008 allowing non-immigrants holding T and U visas to adjust status to become lawful permanent residents in the U.S. This implementing rule will take effect 30 days after publication.

The "T" visa is for victims of a severe form of human trafficking. The "U" visa is for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse because of the crime and who are willing to assist government officials in the investigation of the criminal activity.

The "T" and "U" nonimmigrant classifications were created under the "Victims of

Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000". This law was intended to enable law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking of persons and other crimes while at the same time offer protection to victims of such crimes. Due to the complexity of this law and the ramifications of its application, it took close to eight years to issue its implementing regulations, particularly in regards to its adjustment of status provisions.

Adjustment of status is a process that allows the eligible applicant to apply for a green card in the U.S. without having to leave the country to get an immigrant visa. This is initiated by filing the I-485 form with the USCIS having jurisdiction of the case.

The requirements for adjustment of status under the T and U visa categories are dif-

ferent from other visa categories.

To be eligible for adjustment of status, the T or U visa holder must have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. They must continue to hold such status and must show at least three (3) years of continuous physical presence in the U.S. Continuous presence may be proved through documentations such as employment records, rent receipts, utility bills, installment payments, college transcripts, etc.

The T visa holder may also prove physical presence for a continuous period during the investigation or prosecution of acts of trafficking. He/she also needs a certification from the Attorney General that the investigation or prosecution is complete. In addition, he/she is also required to show good moral character and continued compliance with reasonable request for assistance in the in-

vestigation and prosecution of human trafficking or prove extreme hardship if removed from the U.S.

The U visa holder, on the other hand, is required to show that he/she has not unreasonably refused to provide assistance in the criminal investigation or prosecution.

Another benefit of the new rule is that qualifying family members may also apply for adjustment of status as derivative beneficiaries provided that the principal T and U visa holders are eligible for adjustment of status.

Qualifying family members include the spouse, children and parents (if the petitioner is under 21) of the principal.

A qualifying family member who has never held U status may be granted derivative benefits if it is established that either the family member or the U-1 applicant can prove extreme hardship as a result of his/her not being allowed to remain or be admitted to the U.S.

Before a family member

can apply for a green card, the U non-immigrant holder must first file an I-929 petition for the family member. This can be done at the same time or after the filing of his/her own application for adjustment of status. Once approved, the family member may then file the Form I-485 adjustment of status application. Unlike standard I-485 applications, biometrics fee is not required. The filing fee may be waived if applicants can show financial hardship.

Adjustment of status for T visa holders is limited to 5,000 annually. There is no numerical limit to qualifying family members of the principal T status holder. There is also no numerical cap on adjustment of status for those in the U category.

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

New US Congress Opens, Vows to Rescue Economy

WASHINGTON – The US Capitol building rang loud with vows to fix the crisis-ridden economy Tuesday as Congress opened for business at the dawn of a new Democratic era.

"We need action and we need action now," said the leader of the House of Representatives, Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Republicans agreed, and pledged cooperation in Congress as well as with President-elect Barack Obama – to a point.

On a day largely devoted to ceremony, new members of Congress and those newly re-elected vowed to defend the US Constitution.

The Senate galleries were crowded; children and grandchildren of lawmakers squirmed in their seats in the House chamber as the winners in last November's elections claimed their prizes.

One office-seeker was not among them.

In a scripted bit of political theater, Democrat Roland Burris of Illinois was informed he would not be seated because his paperwork was not in order. He pledged a lawsuit, the latest twist in a political drama that began

when he was named to Obama's Senate seat by Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who has been charged with having attempted to sell the appointment.

Obama was across town in a meeting with his economic advisers as the opening gavel fell in the House and Senate at noon. His inauguration as the nation's first black president is two weeks away.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a veteran of numerous battles with President George W. Bush, made plain how glad he was the old administration was winding down. "We are ready to answer the call of the American people by putting the past eight years behind us and delivering the change that our country desperately needs," he said on the Senate floor.

"We are grateful to begin anew with a far more robust Democratic majority."

At the same time, in comments directed at Republicans, he said, "we are in this together" when it comes to the economy, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, health care and the country's energy needs.

Sen. Mitch McConnell, the

Republican leader, replied in a speech of his own, saying, "The opportunities for cooperation are numerous." He said Democrats should avoid a "reckless rush to meet an arbitrary deadline" to pass an economic stimulus bill that could reach \$1 trillion, and he outlined possible changes in the approach Obama and the Democratic congressional leaders have been considering.

Among them was a proposal to cut taxes by 10 percent. Another was to lend money to hard-pressed state governments rather than give it to them. "States will be far less likely to spend it frivolously" in that case, he said.

By the new political calculus, McConnell will soon be the most powerful Republican in government after elections that handed Democrats the White House and left them with gains of at least seven seats in the Senate and 21 in the House.

McConnell's counterpart in the House, Republican leader John Boehner, handed the speaker's gavel to Pelosi in a traditional unity tableau. He, too, pledged cooperation, then

that calls for greater disclosure of earmarks.

They also repealed the six-year term limit for committee chairman. It was a legacy of the Republican Revolution that swept through Congress in 1994, and in erasing it, Democrats evinced confidence in the strength of their majority status.

In all, 34 senators were sworn in, and apart from the controversy involving Burris, one other Senate seat was in limbo.

Democrat Al Franken holds a 225-vote lead over former Sen. Norm Coleman in Minnesota, a result certified on Monday by the state Canvassing Board. He has not yet received a certificate of election, and with Republicans threatening to protest, Democrats made no attempt to seat him. (AP)

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PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE

ILOKO



By Amado I. Yoro

Sapay koma ta nagasagat manen ti 2009. Adu dagiti pagyamanantayo iti 2008, banag a dagita koma ti itugot a pagtulanan iti umay a tawen 2009 [ken iti masak-bayan].

Kadagitoy a panawen, ammo ti amin, sangsanguentayo ti krisis iti amin a banag: ekonomia, trabaho, pagbalayan, taron ken dagiti dadduma pay a human commodities. Ngem tay kuanan: basta adda pammati iti panagbalbaliw ken talged iti bukod a kabaelan, adda sungbat amin dagitoy.

Iti biang ti gobierno, kas itoy umay a baro nga administrasion

Baro a Panagplano ken Panangrugi iti Tawen 2009: Agkutikan

ti turay federal, baro a marka ti historia ti sanguen ti baro a presidente, mayasa a minoridad, ket iti talek kenkuana a naisaad iti abagana, babalen ti kooperasion ti kameng ti gabinetena, mananama ti pannakabiok dagiti sungbat ken solusyon ti dadduma a karit ti biagtayo. Iti umno, umdas ken panawen ken wagas a pannakaawardasda.

Amen!

Iti met komunidad a Filipino iti Hawaii, tunggal gunglo, adda met dagiti plan ken masnop a proyekto a sanguen ken arakuen nga ipatungpal.

Itoy a kasapa ti panawen, mayasa ti Divine Word College of Laog College Alumni Assn of Hawaii ti mangipadpadur-as ita ti mayasa a 'nainggayeman', 'nainkabatsatan' a reunion iti Mayo 2, 2009.

Kas sagudayen daytoy a pakdaar, agyamankami dagiti

kakabsat nga agpadpadlawa a mayat a tumipon. Dagitoy a kakabsat nga adda iti sabali a lugar, kas iti Canada, US Mainland, ken iti Filipinas.

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Napateg A Pakaammo:

Maisagsagana ken maplan- plano ti International Grand Reunion dagiti nagbasa, nagkolehio iti DIVINE WORD COLLEGE OF LAOAG, weno dati a St. William College, iti Siudad Ti Laog, a maangalayn ti Honolulu, Hawaii,

[Waikiki] intono Mayo 2, 2009. Mapakaammuan ken maawis amin a masekan.

Ti Divine Word College of Laog College Alumni Association of Hawaii [DWCLCAAH] ti mangisagsagana itoy a paskan.

Nabangon ti DWCLCAAH idi Mayo 13, 1990. [MOTHER'S DAY]

Agpakaammo ken ni Mr. Jesse P. Pascual, agdama a bise presidente ti nasao a Divine Word College of Laog College of Hawaii [DWCLCAAH] ken isu ti nadutokan a General Chairman ken International Coordinator. Telepono: 1-808-225-3388.

Co-Coordinators, Amado Yoro, Lydia Pascua, Esther Pascual, Gil Dahilig, Fe Velasco, Larry Fiesta, Domingo Pascual, Edna Tamayo, Luis Butay, Nena Lacar ken dagiti amin nga opisial ti DWCLCAAH nga ipanguluan ni Constance A.

Domingo.

Mapakaammuan amin dagiti adda iti sabali nga isla ti KAUAI, MAUI, BIG ISLAND, MOLOKAI, LANAI, OAHU, ken dagiti adda iti sabali nga Estado iti America, uray dagiti adda iti Guam, Filipinas, Canada, ken sadino man ti yanda, agpakaammo ken maki- umuan ken ni Mr. Jesse Pascual.

[Ag-email iti jessepascual@hawaii.rr.com [Jesse Pascual] ken dakilanguddad80@yahoo.com na adda saludsoden, pakasekan weno singsing - Amado I. Yoro - Co-Chair-Co-Coordinator, International Grand Reunion Steering Committee]

Mabalinyo a bisaiten ti website: DWCL90Hawaii.com ken iti honordecoelho.blogspot.com.

Mabalinyo nga awagan ni Jesse Pascual iti 225-3388 weno Amado Yoro iti 699-9814.

Naimbag ken nagasat a Baro a Tawenyo Amin !

MAINLAND NEWS

Registration of Filipino Overseas Absentee Voters Reset to 1 February 2009

NEW YORK – The Philippine Consulate General New York

wishes to advise the public that, as per Resolution of the Commission on Elections (COM-

ELEC) issued on 26 November 2008, the commencement of the registration for overseas absentee voters has been reset from 1 December 2008 to 1 February

2009. The registration period will end on 31 August 2009.

All citizens of the Philippines abroad, not otherwise disqualified by law, at least eighteen (18) years of age on May 10, 2010 or the day of the election and who wish to vote for President, Vice-President, Senators and Party List Representatives for purposes of the May 10, 2010 Philippine National Elections must file applications for registration/certification as overseas absentee voters from Dec. 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009 at the Philippine Consulate General in New York. The voting period will be from April 10, 2010 until 3:00 p.m. Philippine time to May 10, 2010. The Philippine Consulate General is located at 556 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10036 between 45th and 46th Sts.

Applicants must personally bring the following:

1. A valid Philippine Passport;
2. In the absence of a valid Philippine Passport: a) original/certified true copy and photocopy of Birth Certificate from the National Statistics Office in Manila (BC-NSO) and b) Permanent Resident Card ("Green Card"); - In the absence of the BC-NSO, a) original / certified true copy of non-

availability of birth certificate from the National Statistics Office (NSO) in Manila and b) original; / certified true copy of Birth Certificate issued by the Local Civil Registrar (BC- LCR) or baptismal certificate.

3. If a dual citizen, the original or certified true copy of Order of Approval of his application to retain or reacquire his Filipino citizenship or Oath of Allegiance issued by Philippine Embassy/ Consulate or Bureau of Immigration;
4. If a seafarer, a copy of the Seaman's Book or any other document that will prove that he is a seafarer;
5. In case identity and qualification of applicants cannot be established, additional documents to support identity and qualification of applicants may be required.

The Philippine Consulate General may also conduct field registration to States under its jurisdictions where there are large concentrations of Filipinos who intend to register and vote.

For any questions, please contact the Philippine Consulate General in New York at (212) 764-1330 ext. no. 603 or visit www.pcgny.net.

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FAMILY CORNER (CONT.)

Managing Family ...

(from page 13)

If you're not, figure out why. Maybe the plan isn't working right; parts of it may need to be changed. Or maybe the plan is okay, and you just have to do a better job of following it. Plans are meant to be guides. You'll probably have to make adjustments along the way. Flexibility is the key. As you carry out your plans, it's also important to look over your results. Did you get the results you wanted? If so, then you can continue to use these types of plans and actions. If not, you may want to ask yourself "What could we have done better? Are there ways we can improve on what we did to save time, money, energy, or other resources?" There's always something to learn from an experience.

Also, remember that sometimes there will be events you can't predict, such as the birth of a child with special needs, the loss of a job, the breakdown of the washing machine, a bad

storm that damages your property, or a serious illness within the family. These may affect whether or not you can reach your goals as planned. Part of managing family life means making adjustments when these kinds of events occur. It may mean postponing certain goals or changing some completely. It may mean changing the way you do things. Change, planned or not, is something all families face. Management is a way to deal with change.

Some days, "doing the best we can" may still fall short of what we would like to be able to do, but life isn't perfect ... and doing what we can with what we have is the most we should expect of ourselves or anyone else.—Fred Rogers

This article is adapted from the Family Resource Kit, produced by the University of Hawaii Center on the Family.

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