

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

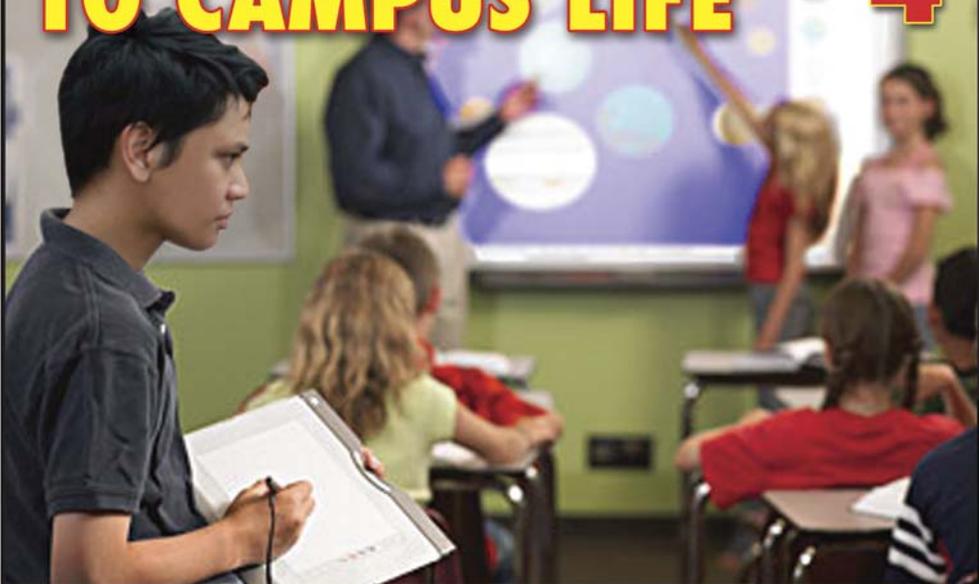
HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ AUGUST 15, 2009 ◆

IMMIGRANT FILIPINO STUDENTS ADJUST TO CAMPUS LIFE

COVER STORY PAGE

4



HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

St. Paul's Church To Celebrate Golden Anniversary

8



PHILIPPINE NEWS

Philippines Launches New ePassport

13



MAINLAND NEWS

Pinay Junior Golfer Wins U.S. World Title

14

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EDITORIAL

Helping Immigrant Students Overcome Hurdles

According to estimates from 2007, students of Filipino ancestry comprised about 22 percent of the student population within the State Department of Education. Included are a good number of immigrant students from the Philippines who are usually in for a rude awakening when attending school in Hawaii for the first time.

For these immigrant students, problems tend to persist in the areas of language learning, motivation and classroom interaction. Language is usually not a problem since they have been exposed to English while in the Philippines. Filipino immigrant students' distinct accent, however, may make them hesitant to speak in class or with their peers. Another factor that may prevent immigrant students from raising their hands in their new classroom is that in the Philippines, those who ask too many questions are looked at as challenging the teacher's authority. However, the notion of a "quiet student is a good student" is not true in U.S. classrooms where students are encouraged to speak out. Those who don't may be labeled as indifferent or unmotivated.

These nuances are just the tip of the iceberg facing Filipino immigrant students who must also deal with an unfamiliar school calendar, daily class schedule and lunch menu. Fortunately, some schools have taken steps to help immigrant students blend into their new surroundings. At Queen Kaahumanu Elementary where one third of its students are classified as English Language Learners (ELL), teachers have established a New Student Support Center as part of its ELL program. The center provides language, academic, cultural, and social assistance to new immigrant and/or limited English proficient students to ease their transition into the regular school program. Similar centers are needed at the middle and high school levels.

The task of helping immigrant students adjust to their new surroundings should not be left solely to our schools. The Filipino community can do its part. In addition to providing scholarships, members of various Filipino organizations should consider serving as role models and mentors. The Filipino Chamber of Commerce, for example, has included a mentorship program among its activities. Unfortunately, those immigrant students who don't readily adjust are at greater risk of becoming a problem for the community after leaving school—which is something no one wants.

Don't Let Guard Down When it Comes to Hurricanes

Residents across the 50th State got a reprieve last week when Hurricane Felicia, which had earlier roared to a major Category 4 system far out in the East Pacific with maximum sustained winds of 140 mph, dissipated into a quiet and rather uneventful tropical depression by the time it reached the Islands.

Those who tracked Felicia may have noticed that she began higher north than usual and took a direct westerly track towards Hawaii. In comparison, most hurricanes form well south and meander westward. Trouble really brews when a hurricane turns northward at the last possible moment and strikes land, like Iwa and Iniki did.

State and county civil defense officials did their part to prepare for the worst. They mobilized the troops, set-up emergency shelters and cleared storm drains and streams. While they are no doubt thankful that Felicia ended on a whimper, their greatest fear is for residents to let their guard down. Let us not forget that the hurricane season is only in its second month, so another one is bound to come our way.

In addition to hurricanes, Hawaii is also prone to earthquakes and tsunamis. Luckily, when it comes to preparing for a hurricane, we are usually given ample notice—unlike earthquakes and tsunamis that have struck without warning. In the event of a sudden natural disaster, would you or your family be prepared?

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Aloha and welcome to the latest issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle! For a while, we were worried about Hurricane Felicia, which was headed our way. Thankfully, Felicia did nothing more than dump a few heavy



showers on us. In general, most Filipinos don't take hurricane warnings seriously. Typhoons, landslides and floods in the Philippines are nothing new. Here in the U.S., the government will extend assistance to victims, but in the Philippines, victims are usually left to fend for themselves. Sadly, the Filipino community's tendency to not stock up on supplies may one day be their undoing when the next hurricane does hit Hawaii.

By the time you read this issue, the majority of private and public schools will be already in full swing. In keeping with the start of the new school year, our cover story deals with Filipino immigrant students and the many challenges they face in new and unfamiliar school surroundings. These students—who are already struggling to gain acceptance from their peers—may often feel overwhelmed and alienated. Contributing writer Fiedes Doctor interviews several immigrant students and provides a good insight into the struggles they are facing. We hope you will enjoy reading her story which begins on page 4.

For you many boxing fans out there, Hawaii's very own Brian Vitoria will be returning for a championship bout scheduled for August 29, 2009 at the Blaisdell Center. He will defend his IBF light flyweight world title against Mexican opponent Jesus "Azul" Iribe. Nicknamed the "Hawaian Punch," Vitoria is a graduate of Waipahu High School and a local boy at heart. We can only hope that Vitoria will be as successful as fellow boxer Manny Pacquiao in defeating his Mexican opponent. Pacquiao has earned a reputation as the "Mexican Killer" with his defeat of several top Mexican fighters. Tickets are on sale, so we hope the many Filipino boxing fans will come out and support him!

Also, congratulations are in order to St. Paul's Episcopal and Philippine Independent Church in Honolulu which will be celebrating its Golden Anniversary on August 22, 2009. As part of the gala festivities, the church will be recognizing five of its members for their faithful service—Eddie L. Aguilana, Dwayne M. Bueno, Mariel Duldulao, Reynaldo Peralta and Amado Yoro. We extend our congratulations and best wishes to all of them!

In closing, we hope that you will enjoy reading these and other articles and columns of interest in this issue, particularly "Mayor's Column" on page 3, "Immigration Guide" on page 7, "Family Corner" on page 12 and "Legal Notes" on page 13.

On behalf of our staff, thank you for your faithful support of our paper. Until next time...*aloha and mabuhay!*

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

On that note, we encourage you to develop a hurricane preparedness checklist and a family disaster plan. Smart families will have survival kits on hand and adequate emergency supplies to last for at least 72 hours. Considering the threat that hurricanes and other natural disasters pose to property and life, it's a good idea to resist complacency and always remain prepared for whatever the future holds.

LETTERS

PROUD TO BE A FILIPINO...?!

I read in your August 1st edition that local entertainers Brother Noland and his brother Tony Conjuacion "reminisced about their Visayan roots" during the recent Visayan Centennial Anniversary held at the Hale Koa Hotel.

I was very pleased that both Brother Noland and Tony Conjuacion, who are known for their award winning Hawaiian music, had come out to identify themselves as Filipinos. Yet, there so many others out there who are still in denial of their rich Filipino heritage.

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MAYOR'S COLUMN



By Mayor Mufi Hannemann

Sharing Aloha with Filipino Leaders Old and New

Consul General of the Philippines to Hawaii. Consul Cardenas hails from Badoc, Ilocos Norte, which I am very pleased to have visited in 2005. In fact, I was adopted as an Illustrious and Compassionate Son of Badoc by the local government. I hope to visit the Ilocos region again this November, when I participate in a trade mission to Cebu and Manila, organized by the Hawaii Filipino Chamber of Commerce.

Consul Cardenas replaces former Consul General Ariel Y. Abadilla, who I was very pleased to work with during his years here. Consul Abadilla remains my good friend, and I wish him well in his new position as the first Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland.

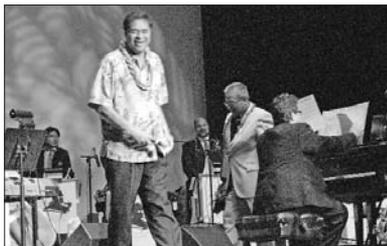
On another subject, I'm very pleased to announce that my administration is moving forward with an exciting new project that will make Ewa Mahiko District Park much more enjoyable for everyone. This \$8.3 million expansion project will include a new gym,

play courts, a parking lot, and new lighting and walkways for the park, located on Renton Road on the site of the old Ewa Sugar Mill.

This wonderful expansion will provide much-needed recreational facilities to a rapidly growing part of Oahu. Coupled with our extension of Kapolei Parkway and other improvements we've made in recent years, this project will add immeasurably to the quality of life in Ewa and Kapolei.

We're set to break ground early next year, and we're very confident that the community will be pleased with the final results.

Regarding another very important project, I'm grateful to everyone who participated in our latest Rail Transit Community Workshop, held at Kapolei High School on August 5. We've held a series of these workshops in Kapolei, Waipahu and other neighborhoods so that residents can help decide how the rail transit stations should be designed, to best reflect the in-



Mayor Mufi Hannemann briefly joined multi-talented Filipino-Samoan conductor, performer, saxophonist and vocalist Matt Catingub on stage during a performance at the Blaisdell Concert Hall on August 5.

diversity of the communities they serve.

In other news, the excitement is really building up for the big boxing match between Waipahu-born Brian Vitoria and Mexico's Jesus "Azul" Iribe on Aug. 29 at the Blaisdell Center Arena.

Vitoria is an inspiration to many fight fans here and in the

Philippines, where he beat Ulises "Archie" Solis in April for the IBF Junior Flyweight title. I'm thrilled that a hometown hero of Filipino descent will defend his title for the first time right here in Honolulu. This will also be the first time in 33 years that Honolulu has hosted a world championship boxing match. Good luck, Brian!

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Immigrant Filipino Students Adjust to Campus Life

Culture Shock, English Language Among Biggest Hurdles

By Fiedes Doctor

They think I'm dumb but I'm not. I understand what they are saying. I just can't speak English well enough."

An eighth-grader at Kalakaua Middle School is frustrated with her inability to communicate what she knows so very well, if only she can say it in Filipino.

Her teachers, too, are starting to show signs of frustration. "If only I can speak Filipino," says her English teacher Marie Domingo, a local born.

At Farrington High School, a student says the same words. "I'm not dumb," he says.

His peers tease him and call him FOB, meaning "fresh off the boat"—meaning someone with a thick accent, mixed English and crude non-native behavior.

Based on the above, does a new Pinoy immigrant have what it takes to survive and suc-

ceed in America's classrooms?

The Language Barrier

Every year, Farrington opens its classrooms to about 2,600 students, 75 percent of whom are Filipinos. The rest are other Asians, Pacific Islanders or of mixed ethnicities. Some 200 students, mostly new immigrants, are labeled ELLs (English Language Learners) and lumped together in a class to brush up on English grammar, comprehension and conversation skills.

"Some students are fos-



silized and cannot get rid of certain grammatical mistakes. Sometimes they say yes, they know the lesson, but then would not be able to explain it," says Akiko Giambelluca, ELL teacher at Farrington. "Most of

the students that struggle with English are from rural villages. Those from Manila have less difficulty."

The discrepancy between the Filipino and the English language in phonetics and syntax is the source of confusion for the average learner, who struggles with English despite years of instruction in the Philippines. Plus there's conversational English they must contend with, which is more idiomatic than formal.

"It's hard for me to say the simple, everyday words. Sometimes I do not understand their jokes," says Maureen Gante, a 13-year-old freshman at Farrington who arrived in Hawaii last January. She initially took ELL classes at Kalakaua Middle School and quickly moved on to regular school. She is a native of Nueva Ecija.

ELL teachers have noticed that younger students tend to learn the nuances of the English language faster than older ones.

"Filipino students are quick to learn, especially if they arrive here at age 13 or 14. There would be about a 60 percent improvement in language skills by the end of the year. It is harder, though, for those who arrive at age 16 or 17," Giambelluca says.

Giambelluca allows her students to speak in their native

language at the beginning of the class to aid in learning. If they need extra assistance, they are allowed to ask Filipino-speaking teachers.

Multi-Ethnic Environment

Mini skirts, short shorts, public display of affection, graffiti, cursing, tattoos and a motley of skin color, hairstyle, temperament and persuasions are among the strange, new sights on campus that welcome immigrant students.

It is culture shock to the uninitiated. After all, back in the Philippines, there were pants and long skirts as uniforms. Anything above the knee for the girls would send them either to the principal's office or the gossip mill. And there were no 12-year-olds lip-locking on campus grounds.

"You see them smooching anywhere with their girlfriends," says Michael Abelanos, 15, a native from Cagayan de Oro who has been in Hawaii for two months. "They are so liberated. I was really shocked."

"Back home, tattoos and piercings are not allowed," says Gante. "Everyone's hair was neat and tidy, especially the boys. We were more strict and disciplined."

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COVER STORY



clannish culture in the Philippines have shaped Filipino youths who are grounded in tradition. The predominantly Catholic upbringing also helps.

America, on the other hand, places importance on individualism and independence, raising youths who prefer to be more self-reliant and autonomous. The high incidence of divorce is also a contributing factor.

"But we also follow the trend. We do not want to be left behind. We just do not go overboard," says Venice, 13, who was wearing a tank top and skinny jeans. She is a freshman at Farrington who has been here in a little over five months. She is originally from Burgos, La Union.

Venice and Maureen can be seen wearing casual shorts every now and then as part of assimilating themselves into American culture. They may imitate the local lifestyle and the pidgin accent, but they will still be more conservative than liberal.

Francis Gante, 14, is hoping to find a crowd of his own. "I need to be in a group but I have a feeling I might struggle with grades if I join the wrong crowd," he says. "I have better

friends back in the Philippines. They are more responsible. Here, the guys are smart alecks."

Doing Homework, Dealing with Teachers

A large number of the new immigrants are responsible, diligent and prepared well by the Philippine education system.

"It's harder to study in the Philippines. The exams are more difficult," says Queenie Viloan, 13, one-year Hawaii resident. "I just have trouble with math because I am not really good at it. But the other subjects are no big deal."

"We don't have so many projects to do here. Homework is easier," says Farrington sophomore Reynan Tabios. He's lived on Oahu for two years now.

In Philippine schools, a deadline is a deadline, even if you're only 10 years old. If you do not pass a certain requirement, rarely are you given an extension.

"The lessons are more challenging in our country. We have exams quarterly aside from the finals," says Gante, recalling days when she would stay up all

night just to finish a class project.

Gante is from a Science High School in the Philippines. At Farrington, she's ranked number one in her pre-algebra summer class among 25 students. Venice, a fellow newbie, ranked second.

"If you want to be in the honor list back home, you have to be in the top ten of the total graduating class. Here, you just have to meet the grade. It's easy," Gante says.

Abellanosa disagrees, however, and finds that the schools here are more demanding and

stern with homework submission. But he agrees that studying is easier at Farrington than at his Cagayan de Oro high school.

"Here, they really teach you," he says. "They explain everything to you."

All agree on one point: dealing with

teachers. Although there are generally no differences as to how subjects are tackled and students are treated, educators in Hawaii come off as better than their Filipino counterparts. The power divide is narrower: they are called "miss" not "ma'am," and "mister" not "sir." You can even eat lunch with them.

"Teachers are cool," says Venice. "They are very approachable and friendly, unlike back home where some teachers are strict and have their favorites."

Welcome to America

Challenges not withstanding, newly-arrived Filipino students are happy to be in America.

The rooms are air conditioned, there are computers for everyone, including a planner for the school year. Folder paper is free, supplies are available— from pencils to colored pens and scissors. Sometimes there's even free lunch.

There is an average of 16 students to a teacher. And according to the law, no child should be left behind. Every-

body has an opportunity.

Back home, there are 65 students to a teacher, the rooms are hot and students sometimes "steal" paper from their classmates. Sometimes they can't finish a project because they don't have colored pens. Sometimes they don't eat lunch, since they can't afford it.

"We are blessed to have this opportunity," says Venice, who is determined to carve for herself a future. "I want to be a doctor."

But do they have what it takes to survive America's schools? Yes, definitely.

"Show us any challenge and we can face it. We can handle hardship because we came from the Philippines," Maureen says, planning to be a nurse someday.

"We know how to deal with people, we are ambitious and disciplined," says Venice.

"We are bold and hard-working," says Michael.

And the two kids who were thought "dumb" by others? They've since passed and moved on to the next grade level. Such is the spirit of our Filipino youth.

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A school classroom in the Philippines

TRAVEL

Discovering Guimaras

By Divine Sanchez-Ngujo
MANILA, Philippines

Best known for producing the sweetest mangoes in the world, Guimaras is one of the Philippines' smallest provinces. Actually this island in Western Visayas is not so small when it comes to tourist attractions and activities.

First-time visitors will be awed by the island's verdant landscape, and the characteristic rural ambience now enhanced with well-paved roads that are beautifully bordered with tropical trees. They will also be enamored with the warmth of the residents, who are more interested in showing their hospitality than hawking trinkets and other souvenirs.

Tourists can enjoy the scenic and magnificent white-sand beaches and coves dotting the island or relax in any of Guimaras' inland, mountain or beach resorts.

For the more adventurous

tourists, activities abound, such as rock climbing, mountain biking, spelunking and trekking. One tour of this kind is the Discovery Quest, which starts in Guisi, the heritage site in the southwestern part of the island.

Tourists assemble in Sitio Guisi, site of the ruins of an 18th-century Spanish lighthouse, the second oldest in the country. From there, tourists trek down to Basyaw Cove, where they can go boating or snorkeling or learn about mangroves and their importance to the locals.

After that, they pedal their way to Tagsing Cave or continue island-hopping. A rappelling session can be added to the tour. The exhilarating tour takes about eight hours and is capped with a sampling of local cuisine.

Guimaras, with its splendid coral reefs and marine life, is also an ideal spot for scuba divers. Nature trippers can explore the island's unspoiled beauty, stunning rock formations, and white beaches, all of which make the island a per-



fect haven.

The most prominent tourist attractions and must-see locations include the Roca Encantada (Enchanted Rock) in Buenavista town. The imposing mansion on a huge rock is the summer house of the Lopez clan. Though modern looking, the mansion is actually 99 years old, and has been declared a heritage house by the National Heritage Institute.

The Costa Aguada Island Resort on Inampulugan Island boasts of its clean, white-sand beaches, a mini-zoo and a jungle park that is ideal for horseback riding. There's also the Reyman

Beach Resort in Alubihod, Nueva Valencia for its crystal-clear water and sumptuous food.

A trip to Guimaras wouldn't be complete without a visit to the Our Lady of the Philippines Trappist Monastery in the capital, Jordan. Founded in 1972, it is the only monastery of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, or Trappists, in the country. Here, visitors may request for a counseling session with an abbot or just relax and enjoy the peace and quiet, or shop for souvenir items and processed food made by the monks.

And, yes, the mangoes! Over 8,000 hectares of Guimaras is covered by mangoes, the main agricultural

product. The variety grown on the island is acknowledged as one of the sweetest in the world, besides being the only one in the country that has been certified pest-free by the US Department of Agriculture.

Guimaranons are very proud of their mangoes, which have found their way into the discriminating American and Australian markets. And to preserve the reputation of their mangoes, Guimaras does not allow tourists to bring mangoes into the island. A tourist check at the port ensures that this rule is complied with.

A Manggahan Festival is also held in May to promote the mangoes and commemorate the founding of Guimaras as a province. (www.philstar.com)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

City Releases Draft Oahu Bike Plan

If you're a bicyclist or use pedal power to get to and from work, you may want to review the City's Draft 2009 Oahu Bike Plan, which is now available for public review and comment. City officials will accept comments through August 31, 2009.

The plan covers the entire island of Oahu and provides recommendations to improve the integration of bicycles into the City's existing and future transportation system, to guide Oahu in becoming a more bicycle-friendly community.

The plan focuses on the themes of improved safety; increased bicycle amenities; increased connectivity and accessibility throughout the island; and social acceptance of bicycling.

The plan also identifies specific programs and policies to institutionalize bicycle planning into Oahu's transportation



and land use planning process. The Plan identifies bikeway projects needed to create a fully integrated bikeway network, to ensure connected and accessible bikeways are available throughout the island.

The City welcomes public comments on the draft plan. The plan can be viewed online at: www.oahubikeplan.org. Comments can also be e-mailed to: info@oahubikeplan.org or to:

Oahu Bike Plan
c/o Helber Hastert & Fee
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More information is available by calling Chris Sayers, the City's Bicycle Coordinator, at 768-8335 or emailing him at: csayers@honolulu.gov.

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IMMIGRATION GUIDE



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon



Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair.

Knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."
— Colossians 4:1

This story is about a former Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations, his wife, their daughter, and a travel agent, who were sued by a nurse alleging that Defendants conspired to lure her from the Philippines with false promises of employment as a nurse in the United States, but forced her to work as a domestic servant in their New York household at the Philippine Mission. Can't sue me, I have diplomatic immunity, cried the diplomat. Guess who won?

The nurse alleged fifteen causes of action. Federal law: (1) forced labor; (2) trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor; (3) slavery, peonage, and involuntary servitude; (4) unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of trafficking, peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor; (5) violations of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act; (6) violations of the Alien Tort Claims Act ("ATCA"); and (7) federal minimum wage violations. State and common law: (1) state minimum wage violations; (2) unlawful deductions from wages; (3) state overtime violations; (4) spread of hours violations; (5) fraud; (6)

Is Filipino Diplomat Immune from Servant's Human Trafficking Charges?

negligent misrepresentation; (7) conversion; and (8) conspiracy. She sought civil remedies pursuant to the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, Pub.L. No. 106-386, § 2002, 114 Stat. 1464 (2000).

Nurse's allegations

The nurse through an acquaintance met the diplomat's wife who told her that in exchange for P500,000, she would arrange her travel to the U.S., obtain a visa and work authorization, and assist her in finding employment as a nurse. The nurse did not have the money. The diplomat's wife said that P250,000 would be sufficient, which she paid to her and a travel agent.

The diplomat's wife had her "sign a contract" that was not allowed to read," she accompanied her to the Department of Foreign Affairs ("PDFA") to obtain a passport, advising her to tell them that she would be their domestic worker. She was given a "red" passport, an official passport issued to members of the Philippine government and to employees of Philippine diplomatic posts abroad who are not members of the diplomatic service. The travel agent accompanied her to the U.S. Embassy in Manila to obtain a G-5 work visa.

On arrival at the Philippine Mission in New York, the diplomat's wife confiscated her passport saying that she had to work for them for six months to pay off the remaining P250,000.

From January 13, 2006 to April 13, 2006, the nurse served as a domestic worker for the

diplomat and his family approximately 126 hours per week without pay. She cooked, cleaned, laundered, ironed clothes, monitored the diplomat's wife's diabetes and blood pressure, provided child care for the diplomat's daughter's son, prepared for and cleaned up after the family's parties, and performed other general household duties. The diplomat and his family limited her meals to leftovers, prevented her from leaving the household unaccompanied, and verbally abused and denigrated her. They restricted her from using the household telephone.

The diplomat and his family challenged her allegations as "a total fabrication" and claimed diplomatic immunity.

The Law

Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations ("VCDR"), Apr. 18, 1961, 23 U.S.T. 3227, 500 U.N.T.S. 98, a current diplomat enjoys near-absolute immunity from civil jurisdiction. Article 31(1). This immunity is given effect under United States law pursuant to the Diplomatic Relations Act, providing: "[a]ny action or proceeding brought against an individual who is entitled to immunity with respect to such action or proceeding under the [VCDR] ... shall be dismissed." 22 U.S.C. § 254d.

A diplomatic agent enjoys immunity from the criminal jurisdiction of the receiving State, and from its civil and administrative jurisdiction, with certain exceptions.

When the functions of a diplomatic agent ends, such privileges and immunities normally cease at the moment when he leaves the country, or on ex-

piry of a reasonable period in which to do so, but shall subsist until that time, . . . However, with respect to acts performed by such a person in the exercise of his functions as a member of the mission, immunity continues to subsist. Article 39(2).

Decision

As a former diplomat, Defendant is eligible for the residual immunity under Article 39(2) for acts performed "in the exercise of his functions as a member of the mission."

The employment of the nurse as a domestic worker was a private act. The diplomat cannot avail of residual immunity, and is not immune from civil jurisdiction for the alleged acts underlying the Employment Claims, such as minimum wage and overtime violations. The Non-Employment Claims, including claims of human trafficking, involuntary servitude, and forced labor, involve acts entirely peripheral to his official

duties as a diplomat. The diplomat's wife is ineligible for residual immunity. Baaja, No. 08 Civ. 5692(VM), Dist. Ct., S.D.N.Y., June 16, 2009.

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Laog 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 Procedure," 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: filamintaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.ImmigrationServiceUSA.com. Listen to the most interesting and humorous radio program on Hawaii radio KNDI 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.)

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IFS-A107534 Ed. 12/2006

St. Paul's Church to Celebrate Golden Anniversary

By Carlota Ader

St. Paul's Episcopal and Philippine Independent Church in Honolulu will celebrate its Golden Anniversary with a gala celebration on August 22, 2009 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. The event will celebrate the church's humble beginnings and its growth over the years.

Brief History

In 1955, the Most Rev. Isabelo Delos Reyes, Jr., the Supreme Bishop of the Philippine Independent Church in the Philippines, was invited as a guest to the Episcopal General Convention in Honolulu. During the convention, Delos Reyes spoke with Bishop Harry Kennedy about the need for a Filipino congregation in



Hawaii.

Through the efforts of Bishop Kennedy, St. Paul's Church was conceived and a Filipino priest sent to Hawaii. On August 12, 1959, the Rev. Tim P. Quintero arrived and was assigned to head St. Paul's Church, which started on Au-

gust 12, 1959.

Bishop Awards

As part of its celebration, St. Paul's will also present five Bishop Awards—the highest honor given by the church to members for outstanding contributions to its growth and de-

velopment and participation in its activities and community outreach programs. The awardees are Eddie L. Agullana, Dwayne M. Bueno, Maribel Duldulao, Reynaldo Peralta and Amado Yoro.

Agullana is current president of the Laymen's Organization of St. Paul's. Bueno is representative to the St. Andrew's Cathedral as well as the current treasurer and a member of the Bishop Committee. He has served in many capacities for the Diocesan council and is also the editor-in-chief of *Ti Aramid ni San Pablo* newsletter. Bueno is the overall chairperson of the Golden Anniversary Planning and Steering Committee.

Duldulao is chairperson and coordinator of the Eucharistic Ministers, while Peralta has served in various capacities, including the Bishop Committee.

Yoro is chairman of the Vicar's Advisory Board. He has served as General Chairman of the 30th Anniversary of St. Paul's Church in 1989, as Junior Warden in 1990 and as

Bishop Warden from January 1991 to January 2007. Yoro's other church involvement includes serving as a member of the Stewardship Commission, the ERDF Committee and the Registration & Credential Committee Convention for the Hawaii Diocese. He was a delegate and participant of The Episcopal Network and Stewardship, Episcopal Asia-America. Yoro has also participated in numerous workshops, seminars and conferences relating to church planting and development.

Other Festivities

The event will also include St. Paul's Church Pageant and the coronation of Queen Maricel Velasco, 1st Princess Raquel Borce and 2nd Princess Emma Dela Cruz."

According to Rev. Cannon Randolph VN Albano, Vicar of St. Paul's Church, guests will include the Rev. Robert Fitzpatrick, Bishop of Hawaii Episcopal Diocese, and His Eminence Godofredo David, Supreme Bishop of the Philippines.

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Exodus from Cabinet Seen

By Paolo Romero /
Thursday, August 13, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - The resignation of Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ralph Recto is the start of an exodus of officials from the Arroyo Cabinet to the political battlefield in 2010, Malacañang disclosed yesterday.

Recto's resignation came just 14 weeks from the deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy with the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he expects Recto to remain with the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD party even if he has close friends in the opposition.

He cited Recto's being "independent-minded" when he was still in the Senate.

He said President Arroyo understood that Recto needed time to prepare for another run for the Senate and she wished him well. Malacañang has yet to name Recto's replacement.

"As you know Senator Recto did not make it during his first re-election (in 2007).

I suppose that this time he's going to prepare in earnest so he can be successful in his second reelection bid in the Senate," Ermita said.

"The former senator believes in the saying that the early bird catches the worm, and therefore he wants to be able to move around more freely with much more time in preparation for 2010," he said.

He said Recto might have recommended a successor although Mrs. Arroyo has "the latitude of choice" among current deputies at the National Economic and Development Authority.

Ermita also dismissed speculations that the resignation of Recto was linked to his public quarrel with Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes over local fuel prices. Recto had accused the oil firms of overpricing at a time when Reyes was being criticized for allegedly not protecting the interest of consumers.

"I guess it's safe to say that those who may be aspiring for political positions, and (who will) join the elections in 2010 may have to resign come filing of certificates of candidacy," he

said.

He said the Palace has "anticipated" the exodus and is confident of getting competent replacements for the resigning officials.

Political Adviser for Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio earlier said between eight and 12 Cabinet officials would be seeking elective posts next year.

He declined to name the officials to keep them from being exposed to political attacks prematurely.

"A good number of them (Cabinet officials) represent agencies that have been performing well and supporting the President effectively and efficiently," Claudio said.

"They can be better motivated to do a good job at what they're doing because the public is watching them," he said.

"I think it is to be expected of them if they run for public office they have to be presenting themselves on the issue of performance," he said.

Among those rumored to be eyeing elective posts are Presidential Management Staff chief Hermogenes Esperon Jr., reportedly a congressional seat in Pan-



Ralph Recto

gasarin; Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, either as a congressman in Bohol or as senator; Health Secretary Francisco Duque III as senator; Presidential Adviser for the Peace Process Avelino Razon Jr. as Manila mayor; Education Secretary Jesli Lapus as senator.

Also reportedly running for elective posts in 2010 are Cabinet Secretary Silvestre Bello III and deputy presidential spokespersons Anthony Golez and Lorelei Fajardo.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde is reportedly considering running for a local post in Cebu.

Senate lineup

Reggie Velasco, deputy secretary-general of Lakas-Kampi-CMD, said Recto is included in the senatorial lineup of the ruling party.

"He (Recto) is part of the senatorial lineup. As far as Lakas-Kampi is concerned, we have no problem with him. We are 100 percent behind him," Velasco told reporters during the weekly Ayes and Nays forum in Quezon City.

"We have no information if he's moving to another party. We don't know the reason for his resignation. Perhaps to give him ample time to prepare for the senatorial race," he added.

Recto sought re-election in May 2007 but lost. He was first elected senator in 2001 and served his full term until 2007. Prior to that, he served as congressman of Batangas for three terms, or a total of nine years.

The party official disclosed that national officers would be conducting "regional consultations" starting Aug. 27 to get the pulse of the local executives on who they would want to endorse for the May 2010 presidential elections.

Consultations will continue until September after which a "mini convention" will be held in Metro Manila on Oct. 15, or more than a month before the Nov. 30 deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy. (www.philstar.com)

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS



NEDA DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL ROLANDO TUNGPALAN

RP Won't Slip into Recession - NEDA

By Marvin Sy /
Thursday, August 12, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - With several sectors of the economy bouncing back after a brief slump over the past several months, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) has boldly stated that the Philippines will not slip into a recession this year.

NEDA deputy director general Rolando Tungpalan, in a briefing at Malacañang shortly after the weekly Cabinet meeting, said that several bright spots in the economy coupled by the positive outlook of the international analysts have practically wiped out the doomsday scenarios about the economy going into a recession this year.

he NEDA, in its weekly report to the Cabinet about the impact of the global recession, cited several indicators to back up its optimism about the economy, including the good performance of the stock market and several other key sectors.

Active trading has pushed up the Philippine Stock Exchange index to 2,800 points, which Tungpalan said is a good indicator of strong economic activity.

Cement production has also gone up even as inflation has slowed down to 0.2 percent in July.

Tungpalan noted that the rise in cement sales was brought about by the increase in the sales of low to medium cost housing.

He also cited the increase in the sales of automobiles in spite of reports of belt tightening among the consumers.

International analysts also believe that the country is moving away from a possible recession.

Moody's Investors Service has affirmed its positive outlook on the Philippine economy and even upgraded the country's credit rating, mostly due to the high level of foreign reserves.

Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) remittances continue to defy the projections of a slowdown with the steady inflow ensuring that there will be no contraction this year.

"Basically we are saying the global recession is coming to an end and some have said the beginning of the end," Tungpalan said.

While the second quarter growth

numbers are yet to be released, Tungpalan expressed confidence that the economy grew during the period.

Considering that there are several positive indicators supporting continued growth in the second half of the year, Tungpalan said that it is not likely that the economy would go into a recession this year.

Technically, recession occurs when there are two quarters of negative growth.

"If we look at the leading indicators that I pointed out - cement production expanding, automobile sales expanding, overseas remittances growing, positive confidence of consumer and business, we cannot see how one can talk of a sudden downturn in the second quarter," Tungpalan said.

"The bottom line here is, as has been warned by those critical of our report, is that we are totally out of the recession and there are no signs that those who foretell gloom are right," he added.

In order to further support the growth of the economy, Tungpalan said that the country would be more aggressive in engaging the strong performing economies, particularly China, in order to draw more investments into the country.

Tungpalan pointed out that China has around \$2 trillion in reserves and its government has directed its businesses to go out and invest in other markets.

"We should take advantage of one of the first movers to seize this very aggressive going out policy of China," he said.

Though China already has a lot of investments in several infrastructure projects of the government, Tungpalan said that the country is looking to attract more hard investments from the Asian giant.

The government is also looking to expand the huge tourism revenue potential of China.

More government support would also go into the high-end, non-voice business process outsourcing sectors such as animation.

Tungpalan noted that the BPO sector continues to be a bright spot in the economy, generating several thousands in employment at any given time.

He said that 90,000 jobs are expected to be generated by the sector this year while revenues are expected to hit \$5 billion to \$6 billion (www.philstar.com)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Erap to Meet with Opposition Bets for 2010 Unity

By Jose Rodel Clapano /
Thursday, August 12, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - Former President Joseph Estrada will meet with opposition presidential wannabes by the end of the month to convince them to unite and make way for a common candidate.

In an interview with The STAR, Estrada said he will throw his hat in the ring if the meeting is unsuccessful.

"I can either meet them one by one or all together by the last week of August. I will make my final decision (to run for president) after that. Maybe, we will know that by September," Estrada said.

Potential presidential candidates in the opposition are Senators Manuel Roxas II, Manuel Villar, Loren Legarda, Jamby Madrigal and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

"I will definitely run if they will not unite in supporting a single opposition presidential candidate in 2010. That is if they will not unite," Estrada said.

He said the more opposition

candidates in 2010, the easier for the administration to cheat them.

"We must learn from our experience in 2004 where FPJ (Fernando Poe Jr.) was cheated because the opposition fielded many candidates. We must field only one presidential candidate to ensure the opposition's victory in 2010," Estrada said.

Estrada said the constitutional provision barring a president from seeking re-election applies only to the incumbent or if the chief executive is able to finish his or her term.

He said the objective of the constitutional prohibition is to prevent an incumbent president from using government resources in ensuring his or her election victory.

Estrada was ousted in a people power revolt in 2001. A month after his conviction for plunder in September 2007, Estrada was pardoned by his successor President Arroyo in what observers said was an effort by the administration to gain a formidable political ally. The former president had been in detention for more than six years before his pardon.

No NPC decision yet

It's still a toss-up between Senators Loren Legarda and Francis Escudero in the Nationalist People's Coalition search for its standard bearer in the 2010 elections, party spokesman Valenzuela Rep. Rex Gatchalian said yesterday.

He was clarifying reports that the NPC executive committee, in a meeting last week, had already chosen Escudero as the party's presidential candidate and Legarda as his running mate for next year's elections.

Gatchalian said the party's search for a presidential candidate has been narrowed down to the two senators but that there is no decision yet on who it would be.

He said coming surveys would greatly influence any decision of the party.

He cited a statement of businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., NPC founder and chief financier, that "winability based on survey rating would be a major basis in the selection of the party's standard-bearer."

"As a party founded on democratic principles, the NPC will make sure that whoever will

be the party's presidential and vice presidential candidates for 2010 will undergo a thorough selection process where all the members will be heard," he said.

Former Rizal representative Frisco San Juan is NPC chairman, while former Isabela governor Faustino Dy Jr. is party chairman. Rizal Rep. Jack Duavit is the party's secretary-general.

A congressman who attended last week's executive committee meeting said they were inclined to endorse Escudero as the party's presidential candidate but that they postponed making a vote.

As for their party's senatorial candidates, the source said they are considering Education Secretary Jesli Lapus, Tourism

Secretary Ace Durano and Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza.

The party also plans to "adopt" Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr.

If Estrada decides to run, Enrile and Estrada are expected to join his ticket while Revilla is expected to be with the administration slate.

Cojuangco founded NPC in 1992 when he made an unsuccessful bid for the presidency.

Gatchalian said NPC is the second highest political party in the country after Lakas-Kampi and boasts of two senators, 35 congressmen, eight governors, 17 city mayors, and 142 town mayors. (www.philstar.com)

House Probe Sought on National Artist Fiasco

By Jose Rodel Clapano /
Thursday, August 12, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - Two militant party-list representatives sought last night a congressional inquiry into the controversy surrounding the National Artist Awards.

In Resolution 1309, Representatives Teodoro Casino and Bryan Muna of Raymond Palatino of Kabataan said President Arroyo has been criticized for naming four additional awardees not recommended by a duly designated selection committee.

"This move by the President is seen by many as a blatant disregard of the rigorous deliberations made by the selection committee composed of representatives of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP)," they said.

They noted that the CCP has pointed out that while the President has the prerogative to add her own awardees, the selection

committee was never consulted about the final choices, nor was it officially informed about them.

"The fact that the specific limits of this presidential prerogative are not clearly stated leaves it open to possible abuse of authority and political accommodation which only serves to undermine the integrity of the awards," Casino and Palatino said.

Casino and Palatino said it was "important to determine the limits of the so-called presidential prerogative in the case of choosing National Artists."

"In view of the scandal and in order to help ensure that the National Artist Awards remain esteemed and beyond reproach, it is important to determine the limits of the so-called presidential prerogative in this instance and to review the qualifications (for) and the selection process of the National Artist Awards," they stressed.

The four awardees added by Malacañang are Cecil Guidote-Alvarez for theatre, movie director Carlo Caparas for visual arts and film, Francisco Mañosa for architecture and Jose "Pitoy" Moreno for fashion design.

The selection of new artists generated controversy and drew

the ire of culture and art workers, particularly the selection of Alvarez who was named national artist when she is the NCCA executive director, citing conflict of interest.

Caparas, meanwhile, was also criticized because his body of work as a film director does not measure up to the criteria for a national artist for visual arts and film. (www.philstar.com)

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Hospitals to Go Bankrupt if Government Insists on Drug Prices Cut - PHAP

By Sheila Crisostomo /
Thursday, August 13, 2009



said.

"It's just verbal and how can we rely on that... if the drug stores sell their medicines at discounted rate, what is the assurance that they will get a rebate?"

Castro, also Alliance of All Health Organizations of the Nations-Philippines president, is set to meet with organizations of nurses, medical technologists, nutritionists and radio technicians to inform them of what to expect after medicine price reduction takes effect on Aug. 15.

"We'll tell them that hospitals might run out of money to pay for their salaries, are they still willing to work?" he said.

"Can they report for work even without salaries? We don't want this to happen but On the other hand, the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) and the

Health Alliance for Democracy (HEAD) are divided on whether the price cut should be deferred.

Dr. Rey Melchor Aquino, PMA president, agreed with PHAP that hospital pharmacies should be given more time to consume their stock medicine.

However, Dr. Geneve Rivera, HEAD secretary-general said PHAP's concern is "legitimate," and that the price reduction should push through.

"While their concerns may be legitimate, they should be very careful to avoid being misconstrued as a surrogate of the big pharmaceutical companies in a proxy war against efforts to make medicine affordable," she said.

"These big transnational drug companies only want to delay or derail any form of drug price regulation."

(www.philstar.com)

It's Official: Pacquiao-Cotto Set for Nov. 15



By Dino Maragay /
Thursday, August 13, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - The contract for the Manny Pacquiao-Miguel Cotto showdown has been -- as the age-old cliché goes -- signed, sealed and delivered.

This was confirmed by Pacquiao's lawyer Jeng Gacal, who also said Cotto will be putting his WBO welterweight title on the line when the Puerto Rican star collides with the Filipino ring icon on Nov. 14 (Nov. 15 in Manila) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

With Pacquiao-Cotto officially a title bout, the current pound-for-pound king now has a rare chance to become the first boxer in history to win seven world titles in as many divisions.

Pacquiao had previously wrested the WBC flyweight, IBF super bantamweight, Ring Magazine featherweight, WBC

junior lightweight, WBC lightweight and IBO junior welterweight crowns.

In a TV interview today, Gacal said Pacquiao and Cotto will slug it out at a catch weight of 145 lbs. Cotto had earlier insisted on meeting the General Santos City-based southpaw at the welterweight limit of 147 lbs.

Regarding the splitting of the fight revenue, Gacal said Pacquiao, as expected, will get the lion's share at 65-35. He, however, did not specify how much the guaranteed purse is for each combatant.

The Pacquiao lawyer added that the fight will be aired over GMA Network, the same broadcast firm that aired Pacquiao's previous outings against Oscar De La Hoya and Ricky Hatton.

"This will be a great fight. Although Cotto is the much bigger and stronger fighter, Manny is faster and also has power," he said. (www.philstar.com)

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LEGAL NOTES

Removing Green Card Conditions Pending Divorce



By Reuben S. Seguritan

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conditional resident entered the marriage in good faith but the petitioning spouse committed battery against the conditional resident.

What happens if the joint petition is not filed and the couple's marriage has not been terminated but a divorce or annulment action is pending?

A waiver may still be filed on the basis of termination of marriage. The waiver will not be granted based on the pending divorce or annulment but according to a recent guidance memo from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Associate Director, the I-751 will not be adjudicated outright but a Request for Evidence (RFE) with a response time of 87 days will be

issued to the conditional resident.

This will give him/her ample time to submit the final decree of divorce or annulment in support of the waiver request.

When proof of the termination of the marriage is submitted, the waiver may be granted. If no evidence of termination is submitted within that period, the USCIS will deny the I-751 petition on the ground that the divorce or annulment has not been finalized and it will issue a formal termination of the conditional resident status. The case will then be referred to the Deportation Unit for issuance of a Notice to Appear (NTA) before an Immigration Judge.

At the deportation hearing before the Immigration Judge, the conditional resident may again establish his/her eligibil-

ity for waiver. But if he/she still cannot submit a decree of divorce or annulment, the Judge will deny the waiver. The conditional resident may then base his/her waiver not on the termination of marriage but on hardship to him/her or battery or physical abuse committed by the petitioning spouse.

Hardship as a ground for waiver involves an examination of the conditional resident's age, family ties in the U.S. and abroad, length of residence in the U.S., health conditions, economic and political condition of his/her country, occupation and work skills, immigration history and position in the community.

REUBEN S. SEGURITAN has been practicing law for over 30 years. For further information, you may call him at (212) 695 5281 or log on to his website at www.seguritan.com

A green card obtained on the basis of marriage to a U.S. citizen or permanent resident is conditional if the marriage occurred less than two years at the time it was granted.

To remove the condition, Form I-751 (Petition to Remove Conditions in Residence) must be jointly filed by the couple within 90 days before the second anniversary of the date that the conditional resident status was obtained. If the petition is not filed, the resident status is automatically terminated.

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Philippines Launches New ePassport

The Department of Foreign Affairs has launched the new Philippine ePassport that will make the country at par with other developed nations.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was the recipient of the first ePassport, which was presented to her by DFA Secretary Alberto G. Romulo. To demonstrate its capabilities, the President scanned her ePassport on a passport reader which revealed her biometric information, digital signature and photograph.

A joint project of the DFA and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), the ePassport makes the Philippines compliant with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Filipino travelers and migrant workers stand to benefit the most from the globally-compliant ePassport currently being used in over 60 countries.

The ePassport's security features have been enhanced with a hidden encoded image, an ultrathin, holographic laminate; and a tamper-proof electronic microchip. Its integrated circuit chip stores the passport holder's photograph and other personal data for easy verification of identity and is fully inter-operable which means that the chip can be read by border control of-



Officials in other countries using a passport chip reader.

The ePassport will facilitate and hasten the entry formalities in other countries of OCWs, Filipinos residing in other countries and Filipino travelers, as well as further cut down on opportunities for passport fraud and tampering.

Despite its advanced security features, the Philippine ePassport will be available for a fee of P950, making it one of the lowest-priced ePassports in the world. Applicants may still choose between the ePassport or the machine readable passport (MRP) currently priced at P500.

The ePassport project is part of the DFA's passport modernization program which started in 2007 with the launch of the machine readable passport. To date, about four million MRPs have been issued.

Initially, applications for the ePassport will be on an appointment basis. Full implementation of the project will take place in the next three months. (DFA)

New York Dinner Host Snubs Reporters

By Delon Porcalla / Thursday, August 12, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - The congressman who paid the P1-million dinner bill of President Arroyo in New York - Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez - attended yesterday's session at the House of Representatives, but intentionally evaded the media.

Reporters from television, radio and print went to the session hall as soon as they were informed that the neophyte congressman was around, but only waited in vain - both in the session hall and at the exit/entrance of the south lounge, where lawmakers dine.

Newsmen waved at Romualdez - who was seen talking

to Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio Arroyo, brother-in-law of the President - and the administration congressman merely smiled and waved back, apparently inviting media men to eat at the lounge.

Sensing that the journalists wanted to hear his side on the controversial dinner, Romualdez signified he had no intention to be interviewed, and went directly to the right side of the session hall, where the south lounge was located. He has hidden since.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said it was Rep. Romualdez who footed the bill.

Romualdez, who has been Mrs. Arroyo's favorite in her trips abroad, is the second richest member of the House of Representatives with P477.2 million in assets, according to his 2008 statement of assets, liabilities, and

net worth. The richest is Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar, who has more than P1 billion in assets.

Romualdez's family owns the Journal Group of Companies that publishes the popular tabloid People's Journal, which could hardly give their employees' salary on time, according to reports.

An ally of Mrs. Arroyo, Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez, who was also present during the dinner, said Romualdez's brother invited the First Couple and her group for dinner at the Summer Resort's Yacht Club but it was full, so they decided to move to Le Cirque.

Suarez, confirmed the Palace's claim that it was Romualdez who paid for the dinner. He said Romualdez's brother Daniel is a well-established architect in New York who resides at the Hamptons. (www.philstar.com)

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MAINLAND NEWS

Philippines Wins Top Honors at Asian Festival in Virginia

The Philippines received top honors in the annual Asian Festival in Virginia and was awarded "Best Over-All" exhibit in the Festival's Destination Asia.

This is the second year in a row the Philippines received an award from the organizers. The Philippines earned high marks from the judges for its integrated showcase of culture, history and heritage through creative, colorful, informative and innovative displays.

The Philippine Exhibit drew inspiration from the diversity of the country and had for its theme

"Destination Philippines: Diverse, Different, Delightful." Docents dressed in national and regional attire greeted visitors and provided historic and cultural information on the Philippines, including a virtual tour of the country.

Among the highlights of the Exhibit were the musical traditions and costumes from the Southern Philippines including the kulintang; woven products from the Northern Philippines; and carvings from Paete, the Philippines' wood carving capital.

Also featured were religious

items, costumes from the Philippines, miniature settings and displays of modes of transportation including the jeepney, the tricycle and the Philippines' flag carrier. Panels of notable Filipino-Americans showed the contributions of the Filipino-American community to mainstream American society.

A collection of fruit carvings by Filipino carvers Eric Baisas, Angelito Baban, Marcelo Dalagan was displayed at the center of the Exhibit. The fruit carvings showed interpretations of various Philippine sceneries. The fruit carvers likewise conducted a demonstration of their fruit carving abilities to the Exhibit's visitors.

Folk dances such as *tinikling* and *saway sa bangko* were performed in front of the Exhibit. Angklung bambusa music was also performed. After the performances, visitors were asked to participate, an interactive feature which the judges of the competition duly noted.

Colorful Philippine costumes were also paraded in front of the Exhibit, giving visitors an overview of the diversity of Philippine attire.

Meanwhile, at the main stage of the festival, *saway sa bangko* was performed with representatives of the Filipino-American Community showing their support on stage.

Filipino-American singer and musical theater actress Stephanie Reese performed three songs and dedicated a *kundiman* to the late Corazon

C. Aquino, former Philippine president.

Philippine Ambassador to the U.S. Willy Gaa commended members of the Filipino-American community for their support and continued partnership with the Embassy of the Philippines.

"This demonstrates the strong bayanihan spirit that remains alive here in the Greater D.C. area. We hope that with this show of support, more people will get to know more about the Philippines and our rich culture and heritage," Gaa says.

The Asian Festival is a free two-day cultural event aimed at promoting a greater understanding of Asian countries and cultures. The Asian Festival has grown into a huge success over the years by attracting attendees from all over the D.C. Metro area and beyond. (DFA)



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Pinay Junior Golfer Wins U.S. World Title

Mia Legaspi, a fifth grader from St. Paul's College in Pasig, the Philippines, won the girls 10-Year-Old division in the 7th Annual U.S. Kids World Golf Championship, held August 1-5, 2009 at the Longleaf Golf Club in Pinehurst, North Carolina.

The U.S. Kids World Golf Championship is Legaspi's third world title. She won the same tournament last year in the Girls 9-Under Division and the 2006 Callaway Junior World Golf Championships in her respective division.

The U.S. Kids World Golf Championship is the world's



largest golf tournament for kids ages 4-12. Over 950 junior golfers and their families attended the weeklong event. The international contingent totaled over 250 players from 32 countries, including such faraway places like the United Arab Emirates, Bolivia, Malaysia, China, India, the Czech Republic

and South Africa.

Dan Van Horn, founder and tournament sponsor, says that golf has become a truly international sport.

"This tournament provides dramatic evidence of the game's growing global popularity," Van Horn says. "International players are some of the game's very best players. When you see the caliber of these kids' games, you'll know why."

Legaspi's victory in the U.S. Kids World Golf Championship makes up for a disappointing non-title finish at the 2009 Callaway Junior World Golf Championships, held in San Diego from July 13-17, 2009. (Good News Pilipinas)

GLOBAL NEWS

PNP Team Wins at the World Police Games in Vancouver

A team representing the Philippine National Police won two gold medals and two silver medals at the World Police and Fire Games (WPFPG), which were held on July 31-August 9, 2009 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Philippines' 10-member team won gold medals in the men's doubles and silver medals for mixed doubles table tennis, as well as a silver medal in the walkathon competition.

"We achieved our goal to win gold medals in this event," says table tennis coach Jose Or-

talla Jr., who thanked the Philippine Sports Commission for its financial support. "Our hard work has paid off."

The WPFPG—an arm of the U.S.-based California Police Athletic Federation—is a biennial event open to active and retired law enforcement, fire rescue, customs and corrections personnel throughout the world. Participants competed in over 60 sporting events from track & field to hockey, to Gaelic football to wrist-wrestling and paint-balling at 50 venues throughout the Vancouver area.

British Columbia hosted



this year's Games which were the largest in the event's 26-year history. A total of 10,577 registered athletes from 57 countries competed in the Games.

The next WPFPG events are scheduled for New York City in 2011 and in Belfast, Ireland in 2013. (DFA)

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