

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

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TOP PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES 400TH ANNIVERSARY

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EDITORIAL

Congratulations, UST

This year marks the 400th Anniversary of the University of Santo Tomas (UST)—widely known as the oldest university not only in the Philippines, but throughout all of Asia. The venerable institution pre-dates even Harvard University in the U.S. which was founded in 1636.

UST ranks among the top universities in the Philippines, along with De La Salle University-Manila, the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University. It has survived wars, revolutions and other landmark events that helped shape the Philippines' destiny. Through its hallowed halls have walked many of the nation's heroes, presidents, senators, scientists, engineers, artists and other influential figures. UST not only provides a quality education for its students, but also teaches them important values and virtues in life, such as community service and the importance of living out one's faith and personal beliefs.

As for UST's Quadricentennial, Thomasians have planned a plethora of events and festivities aimed at bringing together the UST ohana as well as the entire nation. Preparations for such a colossal and once-in-a-lifetime event began several years ago and required the concerted effort of hundreds, perhaps thousands of volunteers. Since UST is indeed a national treasure of the Philippines, organizers are encouraging all Filipinos to join in the celebrations—even if they did not attend UST. Invitations have even been sent to no less than Pope Benedict XVI and the Spanish Royal Family.

For an institution to last this long is a credit to the founders' vision, perpetual support of its faculty and alumni and a testament to divine favor throughout the centuries. In fact, the motto for the Quadricentennial—"Unending Grace"—is an appropriate reference to the unmistakable hand of Providence upon the school.

So congratulations to UST and all of its students, alumni, faculty and staff—both past and present. Here's to 400 more years of success, service to our fellow man and providing quality education for tomorrow's future leaders.

Green Light at Last for Rail Transit Project

The City received the Record of Decision (ROD) from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) last week that clears the way for construction to begin on the \$5.5 billion fixed rail project. The ROD confirms that the project has met all requirements of the environmental review process. The Carlisle administration in response announced a groundbreaking for March 2011. The ROD comes on the heels of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) which was signed last month by Gov. Abercrombie. The FEIS declares that the State is satisfied with the project's plans to mitigate potential impacts.

For rail supporters, the ROD is the culmination of numerous hard-fought events that began in 2005 when Mayor Mufi Hannemann launched all-out efforts for a rail project for Honolulu commuters. The pieces slowly came together, beginning with legislation that established the general excise tax (GET) as the funding source, followed by an Alternatives Analysis (AA) report, selection of the transit technology, minimum operable segment (MOS), draft environmental impact statement, modification in alignment, a ballot question in the November 2008 election, a Programmatic Agreement (PA) for native Hawaiian burials, an independent financial review of the project by Gov. Lingle and endless hours of testimony, discussion and presentations at community and Council meetings.

By no means is the project out of the woods. There are still permits, plans and agreements left to secure, but at least the

FROM THE PUBLISHER



ow are you doing with your New Year's resolutions? Most deal with losing weight, getting more organized or taking better care of your health. While these are great, we should consider other ways to make 2011 one of the best years ever. Resolve to spend more quality time with your children or invest in your marriage. Whatever your resolution is, keep it at and don't give up!



This past Wednesday marked the first day of the State Legislature. There were the usual opening day speeches, well wishes, entertainment and food—but on a much more subdued scale. At press time, members of the State House of Representatives voted to retain Calvin Say as Speaker. We hope that House leadership will decide quickly on committee assignments and promptly carry on the business of Hawaii's people.

Speaking of determined, a small but dedicated group of Filipino physicians, medical professionals and laypersons are now in the Philippines for a week long medical mission. The team is in the Bicol region which has been recently hit hard by typhoons. The mission was organized by the Bicol Club of Hawaii with assistance from the Titans USA Foundation. Please read more about this mission beginning on page 7.

Our cover story for this issue is about the 400th Anniversary of the University of Santo Tomas (UST). Contributing writer Gregory Bren Garcia takes a look back at the rich history of this prestigious university and interviews several alumni who reminisced about their days at UST. In fact, a short list UST's alumni reads like a who's who in Philippine history—Jose Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmena—just to name just a few. We hope you will enjoy reading our cover story which begins on page 4.

On page 3, associate editor Edwin Quinabo tells the plight of Mark Farrales, a Fil-Am doctoral student at the University of California-San Diego and Harvard *magna cum laude* graduate who now faces deportation. Fortunately, the Filipino community and key legislators have rallied to his defense. His case is an important reminder that it's not just undocumented Latinos who have been targeted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials. If anything, more Filipinos need to join the fight for immigration reform.

There are other articles of interest in this issue, including an award bestowed to the Congress of Visayan Organizations from the Philippine government (page 6), a warning from the Better Business Bureau about the top 10 scams of 2010 (page 6), our Immigration Guide column (page 7) and Legal Notes column (page 13). In closing, we again would like to thank you for faithfully supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. Please feel free to contact us at: filipinochronicle@gmail.com if you have ideas, concerns or questions regarding Hawaii's Filipino community.

Until next time...*aloha* and *mabuhay!*

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

hard part is over. Opponents have also vowed to file lawsuits to stop the project, alleging that the City was biased in its technology selection and did not properly study all alternatives. Native Hawaiian groups will be monitoring the project for *iwi kapuna*, or bones of their ancestors, if and when they are encountered. Lastly, there will always be an outspoken core of transit critics questioning the City's ability to adequately pay for the project.

Our response? In as simple terms as possible, there will always be critics in whatever venture life holds. Because we cannot accurately predict what the future holds, we must plan carefully, go with our best and most educated estimates and adjust as we go along. To kill this project or worse yet, do nothing, is unacceptable. We have studied transit to death for the past 30 or so years and cannot afford to delay the project further.

March 2011 can't come soon enough.

Publisher & Executive Editor
Charlie Y. Sonido, M.D.

Publisher & Managing Editor
Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

Associate Editors
Dennis Galolo
Edwin Quinabo

Creative Designer
Junggio Peralta
Design Consultant
Randall Shiromata

Photographer
Tim Liena

Administrative Assistant
Shallmar Pagulayan

Columnists
Carlota Ader
Catio Cadiz, M.D.
Mayor Peter Carlisle
Sen. Will Espero
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Ruth Elyna Mangbalgo, Ph.D.
J.P. Orías
Paquita Saludes
Reuben S. Seguritan, Esq.
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Emmanuel S. Tison, Esq.
Felino S. Tubera
Sylvia Yuen, Ph.D.

Contributing Writers
Belinda Aquino, Ph.D.
Clement Bautista
Teresta Bernales, Ph.D
Linda Dela Cruz
Fiedes Doctor
Gregory Bren Garcia
Danny De Graacia, II, MA
Amelia Jacuan, M.D.
Caroline Jullian
Paul Melvin Palalay, M.D.
Gene Wakai
Amado Yoro

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Advertising/Marketing Director
Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

Account Executives
Carlota Ader
J.P. Orías

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COMMENTARY

Mark Farrales Story Inspires Filipinos to Fight for Immigration Reform

by Edwin Quinabo

Even though Asians make up 9 percent of all undocumented immigrants in the United States and that Filipino comprise a significant part of that total, urgent calls for immigration reform in this country has largely rested on the shoulders of the Latin community.

With more national attention zooming in on the recent story of Mark Farrales, the estimated 250,000 to 1.5 million undocumented Filipinos living in the U.S. is quickly gaining new allies in the Filipino community who are demanding that Congress and President Barack Obama move on immigration reform.

Farrales, like tens of thousands of undocumented children who were brought into the country by their parents at a very young age, is now facing deportation.

On November 17 last year, Farrales opened his door of his Los Angeles home and was taken by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. He was targeted, arrested, detained and readied for deportation - a controversial home invasion-style practice. After being incarcerated over a month, he suddenly was released and granted a one-year deferred action by ICE upon the request of Rep. Brad Sherman (D-Sherman Oaks). Deferred action is used in cases that involve compelling and humanitarian issues to allow the individual additional time to pursue legal actions. The detainment of Farrales was brought to the attention of Rep. Sherman and Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer as part of a passionate, well coordinated drive to release Farrales by both University of California San Diego and Harvard students and professors. His story received additional attention by the Los Angeles Times while he

was being held in detention. Farrales is a doctoral student at UCSD and Harvard magna cum laude graduate. He graduated valedictorian from his high school.

Farrales arrived in the US at the age of 10. His father Jaime, a well known activist attorney in the Philippines, sought political asylum in the US after hit men shot him near the family's home. Jaime survived and fled with his family to Los Angeles fearing further attempts at his life. Jaime repeatedly tried to gain legal status while in the US but was unsuccessful up until his death in 2006. So his son, in spite of being an outstanding resident and productive contributor in this country, now faces the uncertainty that he may be deported after a year.

ICE told the Los Angeles Times before Farrales' release that courts have "consistently held that Mr. Farrales does not have a legal basis to remain in the United States." This is perhaps true under the current rigid

immigration laws.

Unless immigration reform is acted upon, specifically the passage of the DREAM Act that offers a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants who were brought into the US as minors, Farrales faces the likelihood of deportation.

Farrales' story is unique in his stellar academic achievements as an undocumented youth/adult, but his situation is not unique to tens of thousands of other Filipinos without legal status yearning to continue living in the country as outstanding citizens. While Congress and the President stand by on this issue, arrests, detentions and deportations of undocumented immigrants continue every day.

We hope that Farrales' story inspires the Filipino community to action and help them realize that immigration reform is not just a fight for Latinos to wage but should be one for all fair-minded Americans. Rep. Sherman said it eloquently: "It's clearly in our national interest that young people who came

here through no fault of their own and have proven themselves to be the good citizens of the future should be a part of this country."

We encourage the ethnic media throughout the nation to be vigilant in gathering, reporting and disseminating news on the issue on immigration and deportation. There is a huge exodus of our community that is largely unreported. According to the Department of Homeland Security, 18,820 undocumented Filipinos have already returned to the Philippines without a removal order in fear of facing the humiliating process of detainment and deportation. Filipinos comprise the third largest group, next only to Mexicans and Canadians who have returned to their home countries voluntarily. Like Farrales, many of these Filipinos are outstanding individuals who have so much talent and desire to contribute to bettering society. Let's come together as a community and help give them this opportunity by advocating for fair immigration reform.

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UST at 400: Asia's Oldest University Celebrates Quadricentennial

By Gregory Bren Garcia

The history of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) is deeply intertwined with the history of the Philippines itself. UST's nascence can be traced back to the heart of Manila, as it was originally founded within the ancient walled city of Intramuros in 1611. For 400 years, the university has born witness to the tribulations and triumphs of the people it serves. It has survived wars and revolutions and has been at the forefront of many other events that changed the country's destiny. It has educated many of the nation's heroes, presidents, senators, scientists, engineers and artists among many others, and is today recognized as one of the best institutions of higher learning in the Philippines.



The Beginnings of UST

The University of Santo Tomas holds the distinction of being one of the oldest schools in the Philippines and the oldest existing Catholic university in Asia. One could even argue it is the oldest institution of higher learning in Asia with a university

charter, if one is to exclude the medieval Middle Eastern Islamic madrasahs which are as old as the ancient universities of Latin Europe.

UST was born through the initiative of Bishop Miguel de Benavides, O.P., Manila's third archbishop. On the 24th of July,

1605, he donated his own library and P1,500 of his own money for the founding of a seminary-college to prepare young men who wanted to enter the religious vocation of priesthood.

The Bishop's vision became a reality when UST was founded in Intramuros on April 28, 1611.

Originally called the Colegio de Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario, the school was later renamed Colegio de Santo Tomas, as a tribute to its patron saint, Thomas Aquinas.

The college was authorized to confer academic degrees in the theology and philosophy beginning July 29, 1619 and through the blessing of Pope Innocent X, it officially became a university on November 20, 1645. The Spanish monarchy, on the other hand, also recognized the university by putting it under its patronage in 1680.

Since then, UST's history has become intertwined with both the Papacy and the Spanish monarchy, both bequeathing

the institution with the authority to confer additional degrees in the decades to come. UST gained its "Royal University" status in 1785 when King Charles III of Spain rewarded the students and faculty of the school for helping fight the British invasion of Manila in 1762. Additionally, UST now also holds the titles of "Pontifical University," an honor bestowed upon it by Pope Leo XIII in 1902 and "Catholic University of the Philippines," a title given by Pope Pius XII in 1947.

In 1927, UST opened its present 21.5-hectare Sampaloc campus to accommodate more students. Its Intramuros campus continued to accept students until the breakout of the Second World War, a catastrophic period in history in which UST Intramuros, along with many other old landmarks in Manila, were destroyed, never to be rebuilt again.

Today, UST is composed of several autonomous faculties, colleges, schools and institutes, each conferring undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate degrees in different fields such as arts and humanities, social sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, technology, as well as religion.

Throughout its 400-year history, many illustrious names have walked its halls. Heroes and revolutionaries like José Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, Marcelo H. del Pilar and Emilio Jacinto. Philippine presidents

Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña, Jose P. Laurel and Diosdado Macapagal are all alumni of the institution.

It is also the oldest among the "Big Four" Philippine universities, antedating the 100-year old De La Salle Manila, the 102-year old University of the Philippines and the 151-year old Ateneo de Manila. Thus, one can argue that it also has the richest historical heritage, one that the whole Thomasian community is sure to commemorate with fervor during the school's quadricentennial celebrations this year.

Celebrating 400 Years of Unending Grace

The UST quadricentennial logo brings to mind an image of a lighthouse crowned by colorful columns of flames. As a matter of fact, the logo is entitled Tongues of Fire. Designed by Thomasian Dopy Doplon, the logo features the likeness of the UST Main Building Tower, symbolizing the strength and integrity of the institution which has educated Filipinos for 400 years. Emanating from the cross of the Main Building is an image of four tongues of fire, formed in the shapes of the letters U, S and T. The flames are not only reminiscent of the stripes of the Growling Tiger (the school mascot), they are also symbolic of the Christian and Filipino ideals of the university. The logo is highlighted by the quadricentennial motto, Unending Grace.

(continued on page 5)

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COVER STORY

(from page 4, UST...)

During the 400 Days to 400 Years Countdown held on December 18, 2010, the UST community was also graced by a performance of the university's quadricentennial song, *Ako'y Isang Tomasino*. Composed by Faculty of Engineering alumnus Gerry de Leon, the piece bested four other finalists in a song-making contest.

As preparation for the celebrations this year, UST has completed major physical developments on its campus during the last several years. The Plaza Mayor in front of the Main Building and the Quadricentennial Square, featuring the Tetraglobal sculpture, the Quadricentennial Fountain and the Quadricentennial Alumni Walkway were constructed in 2006. UST has also established the Tan Yan Kee Student Center, the UST Benavides Cancer Institute and the Php800 million (US\$ 17.9 million) UST Sports Complex designed by Thomasian architects Jose Pedro Recio and Carmelo Casas. Plans of building satellite campuses in Santa Rosa, Laguna and General Santos City, South Cotabato are also in progress.

The 400-day countdown will culminate on January 28, 2011, which is the official kick-off day of the UST Quadricentennial Celebrations. One of the much-awaited events is the *Simbahan at Bayan 400: Tomasino para sa Simbahan at Bayan* (Thomasians for the Church and the Country), a socio-civic cause which aims to adopt 400 villages nationwide with the help of the organization, *Gawad Kalinga*. Another is the *Lumina Pandit* (Spreading the Light), an exhibit by the Miguel de Benavides Library which will showcase the *Doctrina Christiana*, a book first published by the Dominicans in 1593, as well as works by national heroes José Rizal and Apolinario Mabini.

There will also be exhibits organized by the International Council of Universities of Saint Thomas Aquinas and by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

In addition, there will also

be a trade fair entitled the Thomasian Global Expo, to be led by magnates like Tony Caktiong, president of Jollibee Foods Corporation and Vivian Que-Ascona, president of Mercury Drug Corporation, who are both graduates of UST.

The Thomasian Choice

Jahzp Acuzar-Parungao of Makati City, Philippines, says she chose to study at UST because of its reputation for integrity and quality education.

"The prestige of the UST is one of the main factors that enticed me to study there. Its history alone is already one thing to be proud about; but of course, it doesn't end there. Quality education is still the first and foremost reason in choosing a school and UST is known for it," she says.

California resident Socorro Maniquis-Painter, on the other hand, was awarded a state scholarship for the province of Nueva Ecija in June 1972, which made her eligible to apply to any school in the country.

"I wanted to take nursing and UST has the best nursing school in the country. It turned out that since I didn't take the entrance exam, I could not be accepted at the College of Nursing. Then the College of Science had a special entrance exam for late comers so I took it, passed and enrolled in the chemistry department, planning to shift to nursing later on. But I ended up enjoying chemistry and so I didn't transfer to nursing anymore," she recalls.

Other alumni of UST went to the school because of parental prompting. Teresita Bernaldes, who now chairs the UST Alumni Association of Hawaii, says that attending UST for college was practically a tradition in their family during those days.

"I was perhaps scripted to attend UST since all my siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins attended UST. It was just assumed that I would also study there when it was time to go to college," she says.

Bernaldes says that her education at UST has inculcated in

her important values that served as her guideposts to a happy and fulfilled life.

"I attended UST from high school. These were formative years so the Catholic values and ideals taught me since then have been a big part of my life. I learned to follow the two greatest commandments: to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength and second, to love your neighbor as yourself. In doing so, I am able to face life and its everyday challenges with equanimity," she shares.

Vickie Bunye, a legal assistant at the City and County of Honolulu, also says that she didn't make the choice of going to UST, but it was a choice that eventually worked out for her.

"Although the choice was made by my parents, I enjoyed my years of study at UST because of the inspiring professors, my classmates who became good friends, the well-attended intramural activities, and because of the knowledge that I'm studying in Asia's oldest Catholic university. I was part of its history," she says. "At UST, I also learned values like honesty, integrity,

compassion and spiritual strength."

Treasured Memories

Like most people who attend college, the Thomasians we interviewed fondly remember their college friends. Ronna Anne Navarro-Manaog, a Thomasian from Pandacan, Manila, says college friends are usually the ones who last as lifelong soul mates and from whom you learn some of the most important lessons in life.

"My six best buddies from UST taught me a lot about life—never mind that we were raised differently by our parents. I'm so blessed that God brought them to me. We have been friends since freshman year and we remain friends up to this day, even though we have chosen different paths for each of our lives," she says.

And what's the best way to meet people in UST? As in any other school, one can expect to find new friends by joining new clubs and school activities. Bunye believes that one of the most unifying ceremonies in the university were its religious services.

"The celebration of the Eucharist in that massive quadran-

gle in front of the main building on special feast days, especially during the feast day of the Holy Rosary, was attended by hundreds of students. That gave me a feeling of being united with the whole student body even though we came from the different colleges," she says.

Navarro-Manaog says that some of the best recollections she has of her days in the university were from the fun activities that were sponsored by the school.

"The memories that I never fail to forget are those of the *Paskuhan* festivals and the foundation days. Students are so relaxed after the exhausting reviews and exams and so we definitely loved activities like the sports fest, battle of the bands, concerts and singing competitions. They offered us a breather," she says.

Acuzar-Parungao, on the other hand, enjoyed watching games of the UST Growling Tigers, the university athletes.

"Participating in school activities broadened my scope of friends. For example, cheering for the school's basketball varsity team is one thing we enjoyed together during those days," she says.

Indeed, UST today is known for being the most successful

(continued on page 8)



Socorro Maniquis-Painter



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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Visayan Group Receives Presidential Award

By Jun Colmenares

The Congress of Visayan Organizations (COVO), the umbrella group for Visayan organizations in the State of Hawaii, recently received the 2010 Presidential Award for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas given by the Philippine government every two years. The award ceremonies were held at Malacangnan Palace in Manila on December 14, 2010.

COVO was one of 24 awardees that were selected out of 110 individuals/organizations nominated worldwide. It was the only awardee from Hawaii. COVO received the Banaag Award which is given to Filipino individuals and associations that have significantly benefited a sector or community in the

Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities.

COVO was selected for "its achievements in fostering unity and a sense of community among Filipinos, particularly those with Visayan ancestry in Hawaii, and contributions to the concerted humanitarian efforts for the welfare of beneficiaries in Hawaii and the Philippines.

The awards were presented by Philippine President Benigno Aquino III, who was assisted by Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) Secretary Imelda Nicolas and Executive Director Mary Grace Tirona. In his speech, President Aquino thanked all the honorees for their work and generosity in helping their fellow Filipinos abroad and at home.

"This year's awardees exemplify the spirit of unity and public service that is much needed in this time of hope and renewal," Aquino said. "I salute the overseas Filipinos that we are honoring through this award for their professional accomplishments and civic involvements that have helped uplift the communities they serve."

Nine COVO members (seven from Hawaii and two from Cebu) attended the ceremonies. They were Jane Clement (COVO President) and her husband Eric; Jun Colmenares (COVO Executive Director and Past President); Margarita Hopkins (immediate past president); Nic Musico (past executive vice president) and his wife Amy (past COVO gover-



President Noynoy Aquino (third from left) poses with COVO President Jane Clement (holding frame), Executive Director and Past President Jun Colmenares (second from right) and immediate Past President Margarita Hopkins (far right) during the award ceremonies in Manila.

nor; Hawaii State Rep. John Mizuno and his wife May (COVO members).

A dinner reception followed the awarding ceremony. COVO members had a wonderful time meeting new acquaintances and

networking with fellow awardees from the U.S., Germany, Lebanon, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Jordan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Australia and Canada.

BBB's Top Scams of 2010

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) released a list of the top 10 scams and rip-offs of 2010. Job seekers and others struggling to make money or get out of debt were common targets of fraudsters, hackers and deceptive businesses in this tough economy.

The following is BBB's top scams and rip-offs for 2010:

- **Job Hunter Scams:** Scams targeting job hunters include attempts to gain access to personal information such as bank account or social security numbers and requirements to pay a fee in order to even

be considered for the job.

- **Debt Relief and Settlement Services:** These companies often require upfront fees and potentially leave the consumer drowning in even more debt. Complaints about debt relief and settlement services increased by approximately 30 percent in 2010, according to tentative year-end estimates.

- **Work from Home Schemes:** Some work from home schemes promise to teach the secrets to making money online, while others claim you can make money



assembling items at home or get paid to be a mystery shopper. Some victims even found that their opportunity to work from home was a job to fence stolen goods. Instead of getting paid, you can end up losing hundreds—if not thousands—of dollars.

- **Timeshare Resellers:** Complaints about the timeshare industry—including deceptive resellers—grew by over 40 percent. Timeshare owners who are desperate to get rid of their costly vacation property are being targeted by companies claiming to have eager buyers. Timeshare owners are told to pay up to several thousand dollars to cover fees but after paying the fees, they never hear from the company again.

- **Not So "Free" Trial Offers:** Misleading free trial offers online for diet supplements, penny auctions and money making schemes blanket the internet and result in thousands of complaints every year. The free trial offers seem no-risk but victims are re-

peatedly billed every month and find it extremely difficult to cancel.

- **Itinerant Home Repair/Roofers:** Victims are those who answer a knock from a door-to-door salesman or itinerant worker who eventually failed to deliver on promises to fix their roof or conduct other home repairs. Complaints about roofing companies increased by roughly 40 percent in 2010. One such company, American Shingle, received nearly 1,000 complaints nationwide.

- **Lottery and Sweepstakes Scams:** Victims receive a letter in the mail or phone call from someone pretending to be with Reader's Digest, Publisher's Clearing House or a phony foreign lottery. Victims are told they won millions but must first wire hundreds or even thousands of dollars to the scammers to cover taxes or some other bogus fee. The victim wires the money but the prize never arrives.

- **Identity Theft:** There are a number of ways a person

can become a victim of identity theft—through low-tech theft, phishing emails, vishing phone calls, smishing text messages, or even through a corporate data breach. Millions fall victim to identity theft every year.

- **Advance Fee Loan Scams:** These scams prey on consumers and business owners who are struggling financially. Victims are told they qualify for large loans but must pay upfront fees of more than \$1,000. The victim wires money to the scammers but never receives the loan.

- **Over-Payment Scams:** Such scams typically target small business owners, landlords or individuals with rooms to rent and sellers on classifieds or sites like Craigslist. The scammers overpay the amount for the services or products and then ask the victim to wire the extra amount back to them or to another fraudulent entity. Ultimately though, the check is forged and the victim is out the money wired back to the scammers.

Hawaii's BBB advises consumers or small business owners who have been victimized to call 536-6956 and file a complaint. Consumers should always research a business with BBB before signing any contracts or handing over any money.



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IMMIGRATION GUIDE



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

“Honor thy father and thy mother.” — 10 Commandments.

Daughter Can Still Save Father from Deportation

dence. However, on arrival in Honolulu he claimed he went to the Philippines on March 7, 2010, thus his return to the U.S. on October 16, 2010 was within the one year period. His passport showed a rubber stamped arrival date in the Philippines of March 7, 2010, purportedly issued by Philippine immigration authorities. How did this happen? The man went to buy a ticket for the U.S. Someone must have noticed that he would not be able to return to the U.S. since he was out for over a year. The page from his passport showing his Philippine arrival date of February 28, 2009 was torn out. Then a rubber stamped Philippine arrival date of March 7, 2010 was imprinted on the passport.

Immigration officers at the airport smelled fraud. They questioned him. He confessed he went to the Philippines on February 28, 2009. He was charged with (1) having procured documentation to enter the U.S. by fraud or by willfully misrepresenting a material fact, and (2) not being in possession of a valid entry document.

Relief available for fraud

The Judge ruled respondent was removable as charged. He asked if respondent had a relative who was a U.S. citizen. Respondent said he had a USC daughter. “Has your daughter filed an immigrant visa petition for you?” asked the Judge. “No,” replied respondent. If respondent had a lawyer, he could have asked for continuance so that the daughter could file an immigrant visa petition for her father and later adjustment of status. But the daughter did not even attend the proceedings.

Additionally, a competent lawyer could have asked for a fraud waiver under Section 237(a)(1)(H) of the Immigration and Nationality Act since respondent was the parent of a U.S. citizen.

“Do you have money to pay for your fare to the Philippines so I can give you voluntary departure?” asked the Judge. This would avoid the adverse consequences of deportation. “No,” respondent replied. The Judge ordered him deported. The Judge said

that respondent could appeal. Respondent, after looking at his son-in-law in the audience, replied “No.”

During an exit interview, I asked respondent why his daughter did not file a new visa petition and why he did not ask for fraud waiver so he would not be deported. The son-in-law remarked: “No money.” My rejoinder: “There are people who would mortgage their soul to the devil to save their father from deportation.”

Is relief still available? Yes. An excellent lawyer would know.

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He practices in Hawaii, specializing in immigration law and criminal defense. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.ImmigrationServiceUSA.com. He is from Laogay City and Maguindao, Flores Sur. He served as an Immigration Officer. He is co-author of “Immigration Law Service, 1st ed.” an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. Listen to the most funny, witty, and useful radio program in Hawaii on KNDI at 1270. AM dial every Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. and on KHBC at 1060. AM dial every Thursday at 8 p.m. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice. No warranty is made by the writer or publisher as to its completeness or correctness at the time of publication.)

This morning, after the hearing of 16 deportation cases I was handling, the Immigration Judge called the next case. The prosecutor handed me a copy of their evidence packet but I told her I was not representing the respondent. “What’s the charge?” I asked. “Fraud.” Since I am writing a book on fraud waivers, I decided to listen to the proceedings.

The respondent appeared without a lawyer. He was a lawful permanent resident. He went to the Philippines on February 28, 2009. He returned to the U.S. on October 16, 2010, more than one year later. Since he did not have a reentry permit, he would have been barred from returning for having presumptively abandoned his U.S. resi-

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Volunteers Launch Bicol Medical Mission

By J.P. Orias

People from Hawaii have been sending relief goods and services to the typhoon-ravaged region of Bicol, located south of the Philippines’ Luzon peninsula, some 250 miles off Manila but never has a Hawaii-based medical mission covered the major cities of the region in one visit since the first medical mission of Aloha Medical Mission in 1983.

More than 25 years is a long wait to revisit the area where its population has mushroomed tenfold and where its economy has sashayed with the nation’s predicament. Acting upon a request from Monsignor Romulo Vergara of the Peñafrancia Basilica, the Bicol Club of Hawaii (BCH) was fortunate to be heard by the Titans USA Foundation, a USA-based fraternity of medical graduates from the University of

Santo Tomas (UST) which agreed to conduct a medical mission to Bicol in conjunction with the school’s 400th anniversary celebration.

BCH started planning for the mission in August 2010 with many obstacles to hurdle, particularly the raising of funds. It was in the latter part of the year that individual donations from its members started trekking in from retirement pension savings, winnings from a karaoke singing contest and Christmas caroling.

One BCH member was overheard saying that “it was difficult to raise funds because members preferred caroling instead of conventional money makers like beauty pageants.” This makes perfect sense since BCH is a prayer-inspired social group with devotions to the Lady of Peñafrancia, patron Queen of the Bicol region.

Bicol Medical Mission 2011

will cover one town and two cities in three days. They are Nabua, Camarines Sur, the heart of Rinconada district on January 23, 2011, Naga City, Bicol’s business capital on January 24 and Legaspi City, the southern hub of the region, on January 25.

This mission, composed of ten physicians, two surgeons, six nurses and seven lay people, expects to serve at least 6,000 patients from all three areas with free medical consultations and minor surgeries.

“The mission has \$180,000 worth of medicines for scabies, blood pressure, diabetes, urology problems and other illnesses,” says Dr. Charlie Sonido, Mission chair.

A thousand gift packs of oral hygiene and canned goods will also be given to indigents of each area. The medical volunteers invited medical practitioners of the area to round-the-table continuing medical education

(continued on page 8)

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COVER STORY (cont.)

(from page 5, UST...)

school in the University Athletic Association of the Philippines, the country's premier collegiate athletic organization. It has won the seniors overall championship for all sports for a record 37 times and has held the title for the last 12 years. Its successful athletic program is a jewel in UST's crown, one that also attracts many young people today to attend the school.

Aside from sports, UST is also known for its vibrant fraternity and sorority culture. Dante Verdadero from Waipahu was one of those who participated in this tradition and he still fondly remembers his initiation days in his fraternity.

"When I was a neophyte with the Gamma Delta Epsilon Fraternity, I was asked to measure the Medicine Building by using a poposoro (matchstick)," he reminisces.



Dante Verdadero

For her part, Bernales remembers being very proud of her sorority Alpha Sigma Epsilon.

"I remember having to wear different uniforms—the regular white uniform, the physical education uniform, the social work uniform for field work and my sorority uniform. I was proud to wear my sorority uniform every Thursday since that organization

was only for a select group of students who passed rigorous initiation rites. I am sorry to hear that this organization no longer exists," she shares.

It is also surprising how pretty mundane memories also become treasured recollections for many Thomasians, some of them involving quintessential Filipino street food favorites that students today still enjoy around the campus. Bernales remembers having a daily allowance of 25 centavos and using this money to buy bananacue (banana fritters) and Coca-Cola during break time. Maniquis-Painter, on the other hand, enjoyed balut (fertilized duck egg) but did more interesting things with them inside the classrooms.

"We had a small class with 54 graduating students," she says, "and I remember a

classmate from Pateros who would bring balut to class. We'd boil them upstairs in beakers at the chemistry laboratories on the fourth floor of the main building," she reminisces.

But perhaps more worthy of memories for all Thomasians, past or present, is the frequent flooding experienced in España Avenue and other streets surrounding UST

during the rainy seasons.

"I remember the floods during the rainy seasons which meant a school day off and almost always it was spent going to the movies with friends. Our favorite places to eat and hang out were Little Quiapo and the Varsity. Those were the days of petticoats, ponytails and rock and roll," says Bernales.

For Maniquis-Painter, the flooding caused by Typhoon Yoling in the 1970s was the most memorable for her, and not necessarily in a good way.

"I lived in an apartment on the corner of Quiricada and P. Guevarra and back then, I had to walk through flooded streets to go to UST. While Yoling was raging, I was walking with a classmate who was majoring in Pharmacy through the flooded streets of Asturias when she suddenly went under water. Apparently she walked on an open manhole that we couldn't see because of the flood. I'd never been so scared!" she shares.

The True Thomasian

In college, we learn some of the most important values and virtues in life. Verdadero shares that his most important learnings from UST were those of sharing and giving.

"In college, I learned the values of being a true and faithful Christian; that giving and sharing unconditionally what you have is the most gratifying act you can do as a Christian," he

says. "You are a true Thomasian if you take pride in being a product of UST and you practice in your daily life the moral and spiritual values you learned from the school."

This strong leaning towards Christian values is firmly inculcated in many Thomasians. Acuzar-Parungao says that a true Thomasian does not only strive for excellence but is also characterized by respect for truth and reverence for the divine.

"A true Thomasian has fear of God. She does not compromise her integrity even if she has to go through the toughest situations. She is also dedicated, knows how to set priorities and tries very hard to finish what she has set out to do. A true Thomasian strives hard to uplift herself, but remains humble despite her success," she says.

For her part, Maniquis-Painter says that UST taught her to be "smart, hardworking, generous and loyal," and that a true Thomasian "will always try her best to give back to others who are less fortunate than herself."

Thus, for the quadricentennial festivities, she and her fellow Chemistry alumni are all looking forward to activities where they will have a chance to give something back to the society.

"Before our Manila Bay Cruise on January 23 and the Quadricentennial Thanksgiving Mass and Grand Alumni Home-

coming on January 28, I will be attending the Chemistry homecoming which will be held January 22nd. It is the 80th anniversary of the Chemistry Department and the homecoming has been called Chemback 80. We will unveil a fundraiser called Elements for a Cause, whose main purpose is to help financially-challenged Chemistry senior students," she says.

For Bernales, the true definition of what it is to be a Thomasian is to be whole, to be the sum totality of the great human ideals and virtues being espoused by the institution for four centuries now.

"A true Thomasian evokes a certain aura that makes him or her special because aside from having a purpose driven life, he or she also possesses traits like love, sacrifice, faith, devotion and hope.

"Love means putting others first before oneself while sacrifice means doing without things you were used to or giving something for the less fortunate. Faith means believing in God and being an active Catholic while devotion means being committed to one's family, work and vocation. Lastly, hope means being positive.

"A true Thomasian always looks for the good in every person; he or she never loses hope that each and every one of us is ultimately capable of goodness," she says.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

(from page 7, VOLUNTEERS...)

discussions about Updates on Adult Out-Patient Problems.

"I'm excited to go to the mission" says Dr. Russell Kelly, an internist at the Hawaii Medical Center, who is married to Dr. Cynthia Romano Kelly, who comes from Sto. Domingo, Albay. The Kellys are hosting lunch at their residence at the coastal resort.

Mission co-chairs are Marc Joven, MD and Erlinda Cachola, MD. Also coming from Honolulu are City Councilmember Romly Cahola, general surgeon Paul Glen, OR nurse Juliet Picazo, nurse-spouses Jose and Marianela Jacob and daughter Vanessa, Joe and Delmar Magno, RN and Greg McIntosh of Teva. Bernie and Tess Bernales are the designated photographer and historian of the mission, while J.P. Orias coordinates mission logistics.

Joining the medical volunteers from Manila are Titans Charlemagne Aguinaldo, MD; Lorenzo Tan, MD; Kevin D. Giller, MD; Peire Nap P. Niere, MD; and Rudy Singson, MD. The group will be joined by Bikolano general surgeon Dax Cabredo, MD; David C. A. Reyes, RN/RM and student nurse Angela Losa who is vacationing from California.

For the past two weekends, BCH members led by new president Nino Oliveros, have been packing medicines solicited from the mainland and from Hawaii and trying to squeeze everything into the maximum limits allowed by airlines to avoid incurring high shipping costs.

"As a new president of BCH, I am honored to be following the lead of former president, J.P. Orias, who planned this project a year ago," says Oliv-



Bicol Association members and other volunteers sort medicines to be used at the mission

eros. "Because of the recent typhoons and landslides in Bicol, we really need this mission."

Bicol Medical Mission 2011 is supported by both local parishes and governments of each area. The local team of Nabua, Camarines Sur is headed by Monsignor Raul Pan in partnership with Mayor Delia Simbulan, Health Officer Teodora H. Pomillos, MD, and Laarni M. Salcedo,

MD, Health CaTTruly Dean of CamSur Polytechnic Colleges.

The Holy Cross Parish Hall will be the venue of the mission. Naga City is managed locally by Msgr. Romulo Vergara nad Fr. John Poblete in partnership with Mayor John Bongat, Councilman Jose Tuason and Health Officer Vito C. Borja, MD who is coordinating the medical support from the area. The venue in

Naga City was moved from San Lorenzo Parish in Abella to Naga City Gym which can accommodate a bigger crowd.

Legaspi City is being coordinated by Fr. Raleigh Siapno of Saint Roche Parish, Taysan in partnership with Mayor Geraldine Rosal and Rural Health Physician Fulbert Gillego, MD. Fr. Siapno also rounded the UST medical community of Legaspi to help in the mission.

All these could not have been possible without the help of the Bicol Medical Mission 2011 sponsors—PMAH Ohana Medical Mission, Inc. and Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls and a long list of financial donors and supporters.

Truly, the beauty of Bicol Medical Mission 2011 is in the coming together of the community in Hawaii for the big, big benefit of Bicol, the typhoon-prone region of the Philippines.

NEWS FEATURE

Fil-Am Busboy Outshoots Kobe

Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2011

NBA players of all time. But his reputation could have been tarnished a bit after a Filipino busboy beat him in a basketball shootout.

Kobe was simply no match for the awesome skills

of Ricardo Reyes in a mini-basketball game of "Pop-a-Shot." Kobe lost to Reyes, 82-58.

At one point in the shootout, with Reyes poised to out shoot him, Kobe deflected a shot of Reyes but this did not prevent the Filipino busboy from winning the game.

Reyes went home driving a brand new car, leaving Kobe

eating his dust, so to speak, wondering how he lost the bet.

Kobe, who has won Most Valuable Player honors both for the NBA season and the finals, showed up last Thursday on "Jimmy Kimmel Live: Game Night" to compete with Reyes, who has already earned a reputation as a "Pop-A-Shot" master.

Reports col-

lected from the Web showed that the 41-year-old Reyes has defeated all contenders at the mini-basketball game, including NBA stars LeBron James of the Miami Heat, Carmelo Anthony of the Denver Nuggets, Laker's Lamar Odom and basketball legend Charles Barkley, who last played with the Houston Rockets before retiring.

"King" James even tried to distract Reyes but the Los Angeles-based Filipino stayed focused en route to a 72-42 rout in a 30-second shooting match.

Reyes, it was reported, is capable of making 240 out of 250 shots in three minutes, roughly 1.35 shots a second.

The game is relatively simple. It has a backboard that is a smaller version of the official one being played in the NBA. The basket is about seven to 10 feet high and eight feet away. The goal of the game is to sink as many shots as possible in 40 seconds with three seven-inch wide balls



The Kobe Bryant- Ricardo Reyes shootout on Jimmy Kimmel Live

that roll back down to the player. Score more than 40 points and you get a free game.

Reyes, who works as a busboy at Barney's Beanyery in Los Angeles, began playing the game 10 years ago.

Kimmel discovered Reyes and brought him on the show.

Reyes admitted that he is not particularly thrilled about meeting NBA players during the match.

According to Reyes, he needed to do something during breaks so he turned his attention to mini-basketball.

At first his scores were in the 300s, then the 400s. Night

after night, once the bar closed, Reyes took his hard-earned tips and fed them into the machine. When he came home, Reyes always figured in a spat with his wife, who wanted to know where the hard-earned money went.

Reyes said he could not give a straight answer to his wife but he loved the simplicity of the game and the feeling of being unbeatable.

After routing Kobe last Thursday, a surprised Reyes was handed the keys of a Ford Mustang by Kimmel.

"When she sees my car, I say, okay, there is the money," Reyes said. (www.philstar.com)



HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Abercrombie Appoints More Cabinet Members

A Filipino is one of the four most recent appointees to the administration of Gov. Neil Abercrombie.

Named as deputy Tax Director was Randy Baldemor, who is the president of DiscoveryBox, Inc., a software company. He oversees the company's operations, including investor relations, sales, marketing and product development.

Prior to that, Baldemor was an assistant vice president of claims at Island Insurance Companies and a partner at the law firm of Goodstill Anderson Quinn & Stifel. Baldemor holds a law degree from the University of Washington and a BA in Political Science from the University of Florida.

The four recent appoint-



ments were made after a process that began with applicants submitting their resumes through the transition website, NewDay-Hawaii.org. The process, led by transition director Bill Kaneko, includes collecting input from the community and several rounds of interviews before the final decision is made by Abercrombie.

The governor has appointed a total of 16 directors including the attorney general, which require State Senate confirmation. He has also announced 17 deputy directors and one executive director. Several deputy positions remain to be appointed at the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Department of Human Resources Development and Department of Public Safety.

Applicants Needed for State Boards and Commissions

If you ever wanted to serve the public and have the time and energy to do so, you may want to consider applying for service on numerous state boards and commissions—including the Board of Education (BOE).

Gov. Neil Abercrombie has announced that applications are being accepted via his website: <http://hawaii.gov/gov>. The Office of the Governor oversees more than 150 boards and com-

mmissions established by state constitution, statutes or executive orders. Members of the public may apply themselves or recommend qualified applicants.

"We want an open and fair process to identify public servants who are dedicated to advancing our vision of A New Day in Hawaii," Abercrombie says. "We cannot make positive change in Hawaii alone. It takes many voices from diverse backgrounds to help build stronger

communities."

In November 2010, Hawaii voters passed a Constitutional Amendment for a governor-appointed BOE. The 2011 Legislature will be working on legislation to determine the appointment process.

For more details on these boards and commissions or to download application instructions, go online to: <http://hawaii.gov/gov/about/boards-commissions.html>.

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Job Offers**by Pia Lee-Brago
Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - The Philippine embassy in London yesterday warned about a new illegal recruitment scam involving online job offers.

According to a report by the Philippine Nurses Association-United Kingdom (PNA-UK) to the embassy, the new recruitment scam involves online job offers sent by email to prospective victims, mostly nurses, who have previously submitted their resumes to public job search websites.

The supposed employer then sends the victim follow up emails containing a job offer, a contract of agreement with an attractive salary and benefits package, a certificate of employment, and a blank certificate of good moral character.

Upon submission of documentary requirements, a detailed procedure of send-

ing processing fees through wire transfer is then sent to the victim.

The supposed employer's solicitor usually identifies himself as a member of a prominent legal firm. In some cases, the employer sends photographs of his family in the UK via email in an attempt to assure the applicant that the process is legitimate.

Once the applicant has paid the fees, the fraudulent employer and the solicitor terminate all contact with the victim.

This modus operandi is similar to other online scams earlier reported by the embassy involving job offers for nannies, hotel staff, store managers, salespersons and engineers.

The public is advised to always verify job offers in the UK with the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

They may also send an email request for job offer verification to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) at polo.london@yahoo.co.uk or embassy @philemb.co.uk. (www.philstar.com)

**New POEA Chief to Run After
Personnel Involved in Illegal
Smuggling**by Mayen Jaymalin
Thursday, Jan. 20, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - Heads may soon roll at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA).

Newly appointed POEA chief Carlos Cao Jr. yesterday vowed to run after and prosecute any of the agency's officials and employees found involved in human smuggling.

"The moment the investigation would come up, we will cooperate with authorities. To the fullest extent of the law, we will cooperate with the prosecution," Cao said.

Cao issued the statement in reaction amid calls for a full-blown investigation into the reported collusion between POEA personnel and unscrupulous recruiters in the illegal deployment of Filipino workers abroad.

According to Cao, he was surprised to hear of such reports upon assuming the post a few weeks ago.

But Cao said he also observed that when take over the POEA top post that

there were factional conflicts in the agency that may have also triggered the news reports on the alleged involvement of personnel in human trafficking.

"I have to carefully weight everything because (the report) might be an offshoot of destabilization efforts on the part of one faction," Cao pointed out.

However, Cao gave assurances that if proven that some of the personnel were indeed involved in human trafficking, he would not hesitate to take appropriate action.

"When it is necessary for us, we will act with dispatch, firmness and determination," Cao stressed.

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, earlier, filed a resolution seeking an inquiry into the alleged collusion within the POEA that leads to the trafficking and illegal recruitment of some aspiring overseas Filipino workers (OFW).

One POEA employee also filed a criminal charges against a number of co-employees for alleged involvement in human trafficking.

Cao said if the Senate requires, the POEA would definitely participate in the investigation. (www.philstar.com)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Militant Group Wants Bill on Marcos Victims Certified as Urgent

by Sandy Araneta
Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011

President Aquino to certify as urgent the Marcos Victims Compensation bill to give justice and compensation to victims of human rights abuse during the martial law era.

Former Rep. Satur Ocampo, national board member of the Samahang mga Ex-detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA), said the proposed legislation will officially recognize the occurrence of human rights violations by the Marcos government.

The bill has been pending in the past congresses.

The group had initiated the filing of an historic class action suit in Hawaii in 1986 seeking

compensation for the 9,539 petitioners claiming to have experienced human rights violation during the martial law era.

Last week, a US federal court approved the distribution of \$7.5 million, or \$1,000 each to 7,526 petitioners. The funds came from a \$10-million settlement of a case against individuals controlling Texas and Colorado land bought with Marcos money.

The group, however, questions the delisting of 2,013 victims from the list by lead counsel Robert Swift.

"We reiterate that while we welcome this development, we raise questions as to how the court-appointed lawyer Attor-



Satur Ocampo

ney Robert Swift has considered the victims' views on the case. We call on Attorney Swift to attend the SELDA consultations that will arrange for him to sufficiently answer the questions of the martial law victims," said Ocampo, who was a political detainee during the martial law era.

SELDA secretary-general Fr. Dionito Cabillas said their office would entertain questions from recipients of the funds of the settlement agreements. They can also update their contact information.

The group is set to hold an assembly in the last week of January or the first week of February. (www.philstar.com)



Phivolcs: Mt. Bulusan Spews Ash Anew

by Cet Dematera
Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011

LEGAZPI CITY – Bulusan Volcano in Sorsogon province spewed ash anew and caused rumblings this morning, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) in Sorsogon City reported.

Phivolcs Bulusan resident watcher Abner Ete said that their seismographs recorded a 392-second harmonic tremor before the ash explosion at 2:58

a.m. Ashfalls were traced as far as Monbon village in the adjacent Irosin town.

Ete said they failed to observe the height of the ash due to darkness and the thick clouds around the volcano.

"In fact, our team had already started to survey ash fall traces to determine the extent of the explosion," Ete told The STAR.

Bulusan remains under Alert Level 1 since it started spewing ash in November last year. (www.philstar.com)

CA Affirms Seeks Suspension of Comelec Officials in Folder Scam

by Edu Punay
Thursday, Jan. 20, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - The Court of Appeals (CA) has affirmed the order of the Ombudsman suspending the officials of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) implicated in the botched P690-million ballot secrecy folder deal in the automated polls in May last year.

In a 12-page decision, the special 15th division of the appellate court junked the petition of the Comelec for lack of merit.

The appellate court dismissed the petition filed by the members of the Comelec Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) led by Maria Lea Alarcon in seeking nullification of their suspension order issued on July 29 last year.

The other members of the Comelec committee that filed

the petition are Allen Francis Abaya, Ma. Norina Casingal, Martin Niedo and Antonio Santella.

The CA said there was "no grave abuse of discretion on the part of the Ombudsman in issuing the assailed order."

"A preventive suspension is not a penalty and such an order, when issued by the Ombudsman, is accorded the highest deference unless the order violates Section 24 of RA 6070 (Ombudsman Act of 1989)," stated the ruling penned by Associate Justice Magdangal de Leon.

The CA stressed the Ombudsman has the inherent power to put under preventive suspension any officer or employee of the government pending investigation to determine if the evidence is strong.

The CA allowed the argument of the Ombudsman that it "made a careful assessment of

the facts and circumstances of the case" when it issued the suspension order.

Alarcon and the members of the Comelec committee filed the petition in August last year, saying the suspension order on them by the Ombudsman was "too broad" as it also effectively prevented them from discharging their duties.

The petitioners argued their duties and functions were not connected or related to the issue or the accusations against them.

But the CA ruled that questions on the strength of the evidence to support the preventive suspension order are squarely within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

The CA said the law, Section 24, does not require the Ombudsman to issue notice of the charges before an order for a preventive suspension would be issued.

"While preventive suspension order may stem from a complaint, the Ombudsman is not required to furnish the respondent with a copy of the complaint prior to ordering preventive suspension," the CA explained.

"Finally, it is immaterial that, as petitioners contend, no evidence has been adduced to prove that their continued stay in office might prejudice the case against them. It is sufficient that there exists such a possibility," the CA said.

Comelec Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer said the deci-

sion of the CA upholding the suspension order of the Ombudsman on the Comelec officials linked to the ballot secrecy folder project has no bearing in the case.

"Actually there's no case yet. The Office of the Ombudsman has not even conducted a preliminary investigation. The suspension was implemented (to give way) to the preliminary investigation," Ferrer said.

According to Ferrer, the suspension was implemented to allow the Ombudsman to determine if the case has merit during the preliminary investigation. (www.philstar.com)

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TRAVEL

SIQUIJOR:

The Mystique of Getting Away from It All

by Twinkle Legaspi

minute boat ride to Siquijor.

Siquijor came to be known as “the island of fire” – a place of mysticism, magic and mythical creatures that usually “starred” in Filipino folklore. This reputation was due partly because of the eerie glow that the island would cast at night (thanks to the thousands of fireflies that were prevalent in the island). That, tied up with local superstition, discouraged people to visit. I was understandably hesitant at first, but the tales of untouched beaches, enchanting waterfalls, and famous dive sites were too hard to resist, so I packed my bags, sent out my last few emails (internet and cellphone signal are minimal if you get any at all), grabbed on to a bag of sea salt (said to be used against mananagals - better safe than sorry) and headed off to conquer Siquijor.

Getting there: Jump-off to paradise

Since there are no direct flights to Siquijor, book a flight to Dumaguete. Hop on a five minute tricycle (found ride outside the airport) ride to the Port Area then get on a Delta Fast Craft for a forty-

We've got it all!

Don't expect the beaches to rival that of Boracay, but do expect to find that this little island has more than just beaches! Aside from it's popular Salgadoong beach, there are twenty-three diving spots easily accessible from this island, caves, cliffs, springs and if that's not enough, Apo island (one of the best diving spots in the world) is just a short bangka ride away. Armed with it's own diving center, and a marine sanctuary right in front of it's beach front, and two in-house restaurants, Coco Beach Resort would be a good bet.

Back to Basics

There are hardly any cars on this tiny island, and motorbikes are the way to go. Resorts usually leave them out on a per day basis (Php800) so feel free to rough it up around the island. Don't worry about getting lost, because the island is so small you'll eventually find your way back (but bring a map just to be safe).

Tales of Watchtowers and Churches

Siquijor is located between the two major island clusters of Visayas and Mindanao, and had in

the past vulnerable to pirates which is made evident by the numerous watchtowers located around the island. Towers made from limestone and eggshells were built by the friars and the town's people to protect the inhabitants of the island. It is said that women were asked to set aside eggshells which would then be crushed with limestone (which is easily found on the island) to “re-touch” the mortar that holds the limestone blocks on the tower. Make sure to check out the St. Francis of Assisi tower (1870) right behind the Siquijor church. Visit the town of Lazi to see the Lazi Convent (1887), the biggest and oldest convent in Asia.

Naturally awe-some

My favorite destinatin was Cambuhagay Falls. It was an easy climb down from the mainroad, yet still seemed untouched. From the base of the waterfalls, we climbed level by level till we reached the third tier and just jumped in! The cool turquoise water was too hard to resist. Photographs do not give it justice!

If you plan to take a tour of the island it would be easier if you



Taking a dip in the refreshing waters of the Cambuhagay Falls is a must try! Photographs don't do it justice

had your resort organize it for you or if you hire a tricycle to take you around (Php800).

I "hear" Siquijor

Let your hair down and enjoy the simple pleasures that naturally abound in this beautiful paradise. Words cannot give justice to this little island. It is simply something you have to discover for yourself. (www.officiallyphilippines.co)

1/2 hungry + 1/2 curious = TWINKLE LEGASPI. If you happen to be with her on a trip and "lose her", I guarantee you'll find her in some food stall



Lazi's limestone church

with something interesting to eat. This hunger she has for food eventually led her towards the food industry. Once upon a time she was with a restaurant, a wine bar and a coffee brand then found herself at home – baking. When asked what her profession is she gets to say I get to make people smile after every meal. After all, there is always space for dessert.

MAINLAND NEWS

Filipino Writer Nominated for Pushcart Prize 2011

African descendant/Filipino revolutionary writer Tony Robles has been nominated for the prestigious Pushcart Prize 2011 for his short story “In My Country.” Winners will be announced in May 2011.

A deeply-rooted community story-teller and poet of the people, Robles has followed in the footsteps of his uncle, the late Manilatown poet and historian Al Robles.

Tony Robles has worked as a tenant organizer for the elderly and poor in the Tenderlon, Mission and Manilatown districts of San Francisco. He has also served as the co-editor and contributing writer for POOR Magazine—one of the most revolutionary media organizations in the nation.

Robles' dedication to community, ethics and resistance began as a young child with the

teaching he received from his family of brilliant, conscious artists and organic revolutionaries who, like Tony, supported their families with work in the janitorial or service industry. Throughout his life of work and in the last two years, Tony has worked as a security guard. Through his own lens this “revolutionary worker scholar,” as is the title of his POOR Magazine/PoorNewsNetwork column, has penned a series of brilliant narrative essays and short stories about workers, workplace injustices and people struggling with poverty, “houselessness” and racism in the U.S.

“In My Country” was inspired by poverty and migrant scholar Jose Sermeno of the Apollo hotel located in San Francisco's Mission District. Sermeno was a tenant representative for other migrants in



Tony Robles

poverty like himself and also worked as a laborer.

In addition to working as a tenant advocate and community journalist, Robles authored two bilingual (English and Tagalog) children's books—“Lakas and the Manilatown Fish” and “Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel.”

Robles is also a teacher and playwright who authored a play, “Hotel Voices,” which he co-produced with his wife Lisa Gray-Garcia. “Hotel Voices” is an innovative theatre production which took place in the Single Room Occupancy Hotels of San Francisco and included a 20 week script-writing and performance workshop. It was performed before sold-out audiences across the Bay Area in 2009. (*U.S. Asian Wire Newsroom*)



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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LEGAL NOTES

Notice Required Before Termination of Visa Registration



By Reuben S. Seguritan

grant visa petition and the availability of a visa number — which, in the case of the Philippines, could take as long as two decades — many times the applicants do not receive the instruction packet and thus fail to respond to the follow-up instructions and apply for the visa.

The consequence of an applicant's failure to respond is grave: the NVC will proceed to terminate the registration, thereby foreclosing the applicant's chances at obtaining an immigrant visa.

What happens when a beneficiary of an approved immigrant visa petition does not receive notice of his or her eligibility for a visa? In the case of *Singh v. Clinton*, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit held that the State Department must send the notice of eligibility "to the alien", and its failure to do so means that it could not

terminate the beneficiary's visa registration for his failure to apply.

In that case, Singh was the beneficiary of a relative petition filed by his brother in 1988. In 1991 the brother retained an attorney to assist with the petition, which was soon thereafter approved. In September 2000, the National Visa Center mailed an instructional packet to the attorney at the address listed on the petition filed nine years earlier. The NVC then sent Singh's immigrant visa petition to the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India. The government also sent correspondence to the brother in connection with his immigrant visa petition.

The U.S. Embassy sent follow-up materials in 2001, 2002 and 2003 to the attorney's address in the petition. Then on September 9, 2004, the State Department terminated Singh's visa registration based on his

failure to apply.

It turns out that Singh had actually left India for the U.S. in 1991, applied for asylum, and was eventually placed under removal proceedings. He applied for adjustment of status in 2005 to become a permanent resident, which the government denied on the ground that his visa registration had been terminated in 2004.

Singh and his brother filed a lawsuit asking for the reinstatement of the approved I-130 petition.

The Court found that the law unambiguously requires that the State Department send notice directly to the alien prior to the termination of a visa registration. The Immigration and Nationality Act provides that "(T)he Secretary of State shall terminate the registration of any alien who fails to apply for an immigrant visa within one year following notification to the

alien of the availability of such visa." An implementing rule states that the registration period begins "upon the filing of the DS-230...or the transmission by the Department to the alien of a notification of the availability of an immigrant visa."

According to the Court, the government had no discretion to terminate the visa registration after sending the application packet to the attorney and notice to the brother. The Court ruled that notice to the brother does not satisfy the requirement because "the alien" in an I-130 petition will always be beneficiary, and that the petitioner is a U.S. citizen and so could not be an alien. The court noted that it is the beneficiary, not the petitioner, who must file a DS-230 to start the application process.

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

On an approved immigrant visa petition where no visa number is available yet, the National Visa Center sends the beneficiary a "Notice of Registration as Intending Immigrant" which confirms receipt of the petition at NVC and notifies the beneficiary of his/her priority date.

When the priority date has been reached, the NVC then sends the instruction packet for immigrant visa applicants. Upon receipt of this instruction packet, the alien must file Form DS-230 and submit supporting documents to start the application process.

Because of the long delay between the filing of an immi-

MAINLAND NEWS

Filipino Named President at Seton Hall University

Seton Hall University's Board of Regents has appointed Dr. A. Gabriel Esteban as the school's next president.

Esteban, 49, had served as interim president since Monsignor Robert Sheeran stepped

down from the presidency on July 1, 2010.

"His commitment to academic excellence and the university's Catholic mission along with his strong Catholic faith make him the ideal choice to lead our great institution into

the future," says Patrick Murray, chair of the school's BOR.

Esteban's appointment broke with the university's recent tradition of appointing only Roman Catholic priests to the post. Last spring, Seton Hall named two finalists but the candidates, both priests, withdrew from consideration, forcing the search to start over and prompting months of soul-searching about whether to open the field to laypeople.



Dr. A. Gabriel Esteban

During that time, Esteban was named interim president and served as provost before that. He had impressed the university with his leadership and business acumen.

"We began to focus on how to go forward and evaluate our options, and it became clear that Gabe was the right person," says Murray.

Esteban comes from a family of educators in the Philippines, where his father was a

college professor and his mother was a high school teacher. Esteban attended Harvard University's Graduate School of Education and completed the Japan Management Program at the Japan-American Institute for Management Science.

He holds a Ph.D. from the Graduate School of Management at the University of California at Irvine, an M.S. in Japanese Business Studies from Chaminade University in Honolulu and an M.B.A. and B.S. in mathematics from the University of the Philippines. (Good News Philippines)

Dabawenyo TV Reporter Wins Best Film Award in New York Fest

by Edith R. Regalado
Thursday, Jan. 13, 2011



DAVAO CITY, Philippines — A 30-year-old GMA 7 Davao TV reporter here won the Best In Short Film International Category in the recently-concluded New York Independent Film and Video Festival (NYIVFV).

John Paul Seniel's *Latus* bested 60 other entries that came mostly from North and Central America as well as from Europe by more seasoned film directors.

Seniel said the organizers of NYIVFV are now in the

process of negotiating with the Cannes Film Festival organizers that the awarding be held in Cannes in May.

Latus (Beating) was shown last November during the Los (continued on page 15)

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BAHAGHARI

By Ruth Elynia Mabanglo, Ph.D.

N gayong taong ito, sisikapin kong m a g k u w e n t o tungkol sa ibang tao; ibang lahi; ibang kapaligiran. Layunin kong mal-

palawak ang ating kaalaman upang matuto rin tayong tungkol sa mga kalinangan ng mga taong kasama nating naninirahan sa Hawaii.

Si Ilchi Lee ang nagtatag ng Dahn Yoga. Kaiba sa mga ibang yong nabalitaan na natin, hindi ito basta ehersisyo lamang. Nakatuon ang pagsasanay sa pagkilala ng sariling katawan, pagpasok sa kalooan ng puso at isip upang magkaroon ng holistic-tong lapis sa pagpapagalang o pagsasanay. Ngunit hindi iyan ang paksa ko. Ibig kong ipakilala sa inyo si Ilchi Lee.

May iba't ibang katauhan si Ilchi Lee. Guro siya, practitioner, musician, martial art practitioner at tagalunsad ng iba't ibang pandaigdigang kilusan. Siya ang nanguna sa pagpapalaganap ng "Brain Wave Vibration", isang paraan para makabalik ang

Kuwentong Korean: Si Ilchi Lee at ang Kapayapaan

bawat isa sa ritmo ng masaya at malusog na buhay.

Pano niya nadiiskubre ang "brain wave vibration"? Magandang kuwento ito na kuwentong rin ng buhay niya. Isinlang sa South Korea si Ilchi Lee. Anak siya ng isang guro pero nahirapan siya sa pag-aaral dahil hindi siya makapokus at mahilig siyang makipaglaro sa kanyang imahinasyon. Nilaban niya ang pagkakaroon ng ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) sa pamamagitan ng maalab at masinsinang pagsasanay na kapwa pisikal at mental. Sang-ayon sa mga isinulat niyang libro, tinulungan siya ng mga karanasan niya para magkaroon ng mga pamamaraan ng mga batayan sa pagsasanay ng utak. Nag-aral siya ng Taekwondo noong bata pa siya para pakalmahin ang isip niya hanggang maging fourth-level black belt siya. Noong 1972, natapos niya ang Taekwondo master education at noong 1977, grumadwey siya ng BS degree in clinical pathology and physical education sa Dankook University. Pagkaraan nagkaasawa siya at nagtatag ng pamilya.

Gayunman, maraming tanong sa isip ni Ilchi Lee. Patuloy siyang inuukilil ng mga

tanong kung kaya umakyat siya sa bundok ng Moak sa Korea at gaya ni Gautama Siddharta Buddha, naging asetiko sa loob ng 21 araw. Wala siyang ginawa kundi magdili-dili (meditate), mag-ayuno (fast) nang walang pagkain, inumin, tulog o pahinga. Natamo niya ang kaliwanagan (enlightenment) na magiging batayan ng kanyang mga pamamaraan.

Nagturo siya sa parke at tumulong sa isang biktima ng "stroke". Sa panahong ito niya ginamit ang pangalang Ilchi (na ang ibig sabihin, dalirang nakatanto sa katotohanan). Lumaki ang grupo ng mga taong tinuturuan niya sa parke kaya kapag masama ang panahon, nahihirapan siya. Samakatiwid, naisip niyang itayo ang umang Sentro ng Dahn sa Seoul, South Korea. May mahigit 300 Dahn Yoga centers doon. Noong 1991, nagtungo siya sa Estados Unidos at ikinalat ang kanyang simulain dito. May 126 sentro na ngayon sa U.S. Samantalay'y maraming korporasyon Korean ang gumagamit ng kanyang simulain, gaya ng Samsung at Hyundai. May ilang ahensiya rin ng gobyerno sa South Korea ang tinulungan ng pilosopiya niya.

Itinatag ni Ilchi Lee and IBREA (International Brain Education Association) at noong 2000, inanyayahan siya ng United Nations na magsalita tungkol sa "Papel ng Brain Education sa Pandaigdigang Kalusugan ng Isip". Sa tungo ito rin ipinayahang ng Lungsod ng Nuweba York ang "IBREA Brain Education Day" bilang pagkilala sa ambag niya sa edukasyon, kalusugan at kabutihan ng mga mamamayan ng New York.

Binitibagay-diin ni Ilchi Lee na pandaigdigang kapaya-

paan ang layunin ng kanyang mga pagsasanay. Upang matamo ito, kailangan ang magkaroon ng personal na kaliwanagan gaya ng mahanap sa mga pilosopiyang silanganin; at, patulog sa pagpapauland ng kalagayan ng tao sa mundo. Bilang pagsunod dito, inilunsad niya ang HSP (H for health; S for smile and P for peace). Kailangan daw lumapas ang tao sa pagkilala sa sarili bilang mamamayan ng kanyang bansa; bagkus dapat niyang kilalanin ang sarili bilang mamamayan ng mundo.

Noong magbukas ang milenyo (August 28, 2000), inihandog ni Ilchi Lee ang dasal na ito sa World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders sa General Assembly Hall ng United Nations:

2011 DALANGING PANGKAPAYAPAAN NI ILCHI LEE

Inihahandog ko ang dalangin pangkapayapaang ito Hindi sa Diyos ng mga Kristiyano Hindi sa Diyos ng Budismo Hindi sa Diyos ng Islam Ni hindi sa Diyos ng mga Hudyo Kundi sa Diyos ng sangkatauhan

Sapagkat ang idinadalangin nating kapayapaan'y Hindi kapayapaang Kristiyano Ni hindi kapayapaan ng Budismo Ni kapayapaan ng Islam O kapayapaan kaya ng mga Hudyo Kundi kapayapaan ng tao Para sa ating lahat.

Inihahandog ko ang dalangin pangkapayapaang ito Sa Diyos na tumatuhan sa kabuturan ng bawat isa sa atin Yaong nagtittig sa atin ng ligaya'y tuwa Yaong nagkalolob ng kaganapan At nakatutulong sa ating maunawaan ang buhay Sa pagpapahayag ng pag-ibig sa lahat ng tao

Sapagkat walang relihiyon magkahihigit pa Sa ibang relihiyon Dahil walang katotohanang ikatig na toto Kaysa katotohanan Sapagkat walang bayang lalaki pa Kaysa sa mundo mismo

Tumulong tayong pumakabla Sa ating maliit na limitasyon At matatlong lahat tayoy' isa Na mula tayong lahat sa daigdig, Na lahat tayoy' mamamayan ng mundo bago tayong naging Indian, Korean o American

Niikha ng Diyos ang mundo At tayong mga tao ang nararapang magpapayong nito Sa pagkilalang mula tayong sa mundo At hindi mula sa anumang bayan, lahi o relihiyon. Sa pagkilalang tunay na isa Ang ating pinagmulang ipiritwal na kalinangan.

Humingi tayong ngayon ng paumanhin Sa sangkatauhan Sa kirit na idinulot ng mga relihiyon Para magpapaling ang sakit Mangako layo sa isa' isa Na lalampasan natin ang kompetisyon at egotismo Na magkakaiba tayong warfy' isa ang Maykapal

Inihahandog ko ang dalangin pangkapayapaang ito Sa iyong pinakadakilang Upang tulungan kaming mahanap ka sa aming kalooan Upang taas-noong makatayo kami sa harap mo Bilang isang sangkatauhan.

Inihahandog ko itong dalangin pangkapayapaan Kasama ang lahat ng kapwa mamamayan ng kalupaan Para sa kapayapaang di magmamaliw sa mundo.

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GLOBAL NEWS

Migrante: Waiting for Repatriation, 40 OFWs Stay Under Saudi Bridge

MANILA, Philippines – Around 40 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), mostly women with children, have camped out anew under the Khandara Bridge in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, waiting for Philippine embassy officials to repatriate them, a group said today.

Migrante-Jeddah chairperson Bob Fajarito said this is despite the six-month window announced by the Saudi Arabia government to undocumented aliens.

"These women and children got so tired of waiting for that 'amnesty' and became so desperate as to brave the elements in order to go home through the only way they know," Fajarito said.

Jeddah has been reeling under a cold spell, with temperature ranging from 18 to 25 degrees and heavy rainfall since late December when the OFWs started to camp under the Bridge, he said.

"In fact, they were forced to remain standing for the remainder of last night because their tents have been flooded (due to heavy rains)," Fajarito added.

According to Fajarito, Consul General Ezzedin Tago supposedly promised to send his staff and check the OFWs



camped under Khandara during a dialogue with Migrante Jeddah officials last Tuesday.

"Yet Friday came, and still nobody came. It's just as frustrating as their 'amnesty logbook,'" referring to the record book at the Philippine Consulate where "stranded" Filipinos sign up to express their willingness to avail of the 'amnesty' program offered by the Saudi government. (www.philstar.com)

MAINLAND NEWS

(from page 13, DABAWENYO ...)

Angles leg of the NYIFVF, which Seniel attended.

Seniel, a graduate of the Holy Cross of Davao College, told the STAR that filmmaking has always been his first love.

He said he is thankful to the management of GMA Network for allowing him to make short films on the side. His full-time job is as reporter and host of Isyu Karon, a local documentary program in Davao City.

"I am glad that GMA has also been supportive of my first love which is film making. It is in film making that I am able to tell more stories about what we cover every day as a reporter," Seniel said.

He explained that what he fails to show on TV because of the limitations, he is able to convey through his short films. He has already done several.

He described Latus, which he did in 2008, as a story about street children and domestic violence.

Latus conveys basically the message that it is against corporal punishment at home. The story revolves around two best friends who both experience corporal punishment in their own homes and how they cope with the struggles both in school and at home.

The film, which was also in done in cooperation with the Tambayan Center for Street Children's Rights, Inc., was based on the stories of the adolescent street girls in Davao City.

"I would say that these street children were the writers and the actors themselves in their own stories in Latus," Seniel said.

He further explained that street violence could be an extension of the domestic violence these children also experience in their own homes.

Latus was also Seniel's first entry to Cine-

malaya in 2009.

Seniel's first foray into film making was Torture, which won Best Picture and Best Director awards in the First Guerilla Film Festival in 2003.

And the following year, 2004, Seniel was commissioned to direct a documentary about autism. The film Amuma, Hands for Nobody participated in the NYIFVF, and garnered rave reviews which paved the way for his making Latus.

In 2007, Seniel was hailed as the Most Promising Filmmaker in the Mindanao Film Festival. (www.philstar.com)

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Dollar Menu

at breakfast

Sa wakas, breakfast I can really warm up to.



\$1
lang

araw-araw

premium roast **coffee**
sausage **McMuffin**[®]
sausage **biscuit**
sausage **burrito**
hash **browns**

Ang sarap ng gising sa umaga lalo na with McDonald's[®] Dollar Menu at Breakfast. Pili na sa limang hot and delicious favorites like a Premium Roast Coffee and a warm Sausage McMuffin – \$1 lang. Araw-araw! Kaya't pag almusal, you know where to find me.



i'm lovin' it[®]