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◆ SEPTEMBER 13, 2014 ◆

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EDITORIALS

Supporting Our Troops

Over the past decade, the men and women of our U.S. military have fought two separate, difficult conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite the tremendous challenges, our troops have responded with great courage and honor. Every day, these brave men and women perform heroic acts of service for our country. They are deserving of our respect and admiration for their sacrifices. To fully appreciate their commitment, we as a nation need to better understand not only their struggles on the battlefield but also the tremendous levels of stress placed on their families whenever these soldiers are deployed. Since the global war on terrorism began, over two million U.S. troops have been deployed.

With deployment and re-deployment at current record levels, military families are more than ever experiencing increased amounts of strain on their marriages, finances and personal health, including depression, anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health disorders. In extreme cases, extended deployment has resulted in substance abuse, divorce and even suicide. These strains don't automatically disappear when soldiers return home and begin transitioning back to civilian life.

We as a nation could certainly do more to support our troops. Programs like the Armed Services YMCA provide childcare, tutoring, mentoring, counseling and other services to help families reconnect—but much more is needed. Expanding job opportunities for our veterans and fighting to end veteran homelessness are also at the top of the list. Kudos to the Obama administration for partnering with private banks and financial institutions on a program to help active duty military to lower their monthly mortgage payments. Practical assistance such as this shows our servicemen and women that we have their backs while they are on tours of duty around the world.

To our brave military men and women, thank you for your sacrifices. As you have made a commitment to serving our nation, we in the same manner commit ourselves to supporting you before, during and after your deployment. We are committed to ensuring that all veterans, in wars past and present, are fully repaid for the many sacrifices they have done for us.

Domestic Violence Sacks Pro Football Player

The video doesn't lie. Former NFL running back Ray Rice learned that lesson the hard way after new video emerged this week which showed him striking his then-fiancee Janay Palmer in an Atlantic City elevator last February, rendering her unconscious. What happens next is equally disturbing. Rice does not bother to check on Palmer's injuries, but waits until the elevator doors open and tries to drag her away. Rice was promptly released by his team, the Baltimore Ravens, and suspended indefinitely by the NFL. His career, for all intents and purposes, is all but over.

It took this latest video, totaling some 3 minutes, for Rice's team to finally dump him. When the initial video showing Rice dragging an unconscious Palmer out of the elevator was released, the NFL stood by Rice and gave him a laughable two game suspension. It was a decision roundly criticized by many as being way too lenient. NFL commissioner Roger Goodell

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Aloha and welcome to another issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. I hope that the 2014-2015 school year has gotten off to a nice, smooth start for you and your family.

Earlier this week, our nation paused to observe the 13th Anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. It was a solemn reminder of the importance of remaining ever vigilant against any and all threats against our freedoms and our way of life. While 9/11 is an important date to remember, let's also not forget May 2, 2011—the day when our military brought its perpetrator Osama bin Laden to justice.

On a related note, our cover story for this issue (The Stress of Military Deployment) focuses on the unique challenges faced by military families and veterans. We interviewed several military spouses and a U.S. Army chaplain but due to the sensitive nature of their situations, we decided that it would be best to protect their identities. A good number of Filipinos have chosen the military as a career and for good reason. There are numerous perks associated with military service, which can open doors for you throughout life since potential employers are impressed with the skills, training and dedication you have acquired as a member of the military. On the downside, there are challenges for military families to overcome, such as the stress of deployment and frequent reassignments. If you are a military spouse or if a family member is away on deployment, turn to page 4 for tips on how to more effectively cope during this particularly difficult time in your life. Lastly, in our Health & Family column on page 10 are the Top 10 Unhealthy Habits that we should all strive to avoid if we want to live longer, more fulfilling lives.

That's all for now. I encourage you to take a few moments to read through this issue and our many useful and informative columns like Opinion (page 3), Immigration Guide (page 7), Candid Perspectives (page 9) and Legal Notes (page 13). Once again, we'd like to thank our readers and advertisers for their faithful support of the Chronicle. It's truly a blessing to partner with them in our mission to serve Hawaii's vibrant and dynamic Filipino community. Please feel free to share with us any story ideas, suggestions or concerns you may have. Send your email to: filipinochronicle@gmail.com.

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

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OPINION

Crisis

FIRST PERSON by Alex Magno

First, the Palace apologized for the state of the MRT. Then, over the weekend, the Palace apologized for the horrendous traffic jam at the NLEX last Friday.

It is as if that by apologizing the problems will melt away. Or, more precisely, wished away.

The evidence, however, is that the problems are not only worsening, they are converging. For instance, in order to move out the accumulated volume of cargo at the Port of Manila, rules regarding the truck ban will be relaxed over the next two weeks. This will result in clogging all of Metro Manila's streets, making movement all the more traumatic for the 12 million residents of this God-forsaken place.

Should the commuter trains continue breaking down, there will be hell for all commuters. Brace for the worst.

It might have been more comforting if Malacanang's apologies came with a comprehensive plan of action. We see none — other than the postponement of digging here and the installation of zip lanes there.

In the wake of last Fri-

day's traffic nightmare, business groups decried the fact that no one seemed to be in charge. There was the usual finger-pointing among government agencies. No one seemed ready to take responsibility.

Meanwhile, the businessmen reminded the Palace, our productivity is taking a major hit. The logistical nightmare is inflicting enormous losses. This will push up prices for all consumers. What a happy Christmas we will all have!

Next year, we will be hosting the APEC summit here in Manila. All the leaders coming here will see for themselves the gates of hell. By that time, we will have rotating blackouts and, very likely, water shortages. It is a good time as any to have rioting in the streets.

We have a transport crisis staring at us, strangling the metropolis. Yet government does not seem ready to acknowledge that.

Smug

When President Aquino was asked last year about the worsening traffic situation in Metro Manila, he gave us a smug reply. The traffic, he said, demonstrates our economic progress.

That was not just smug,



The daily long lines of passengers in MRT stations and (below) the 'monster' traffic at NLEX

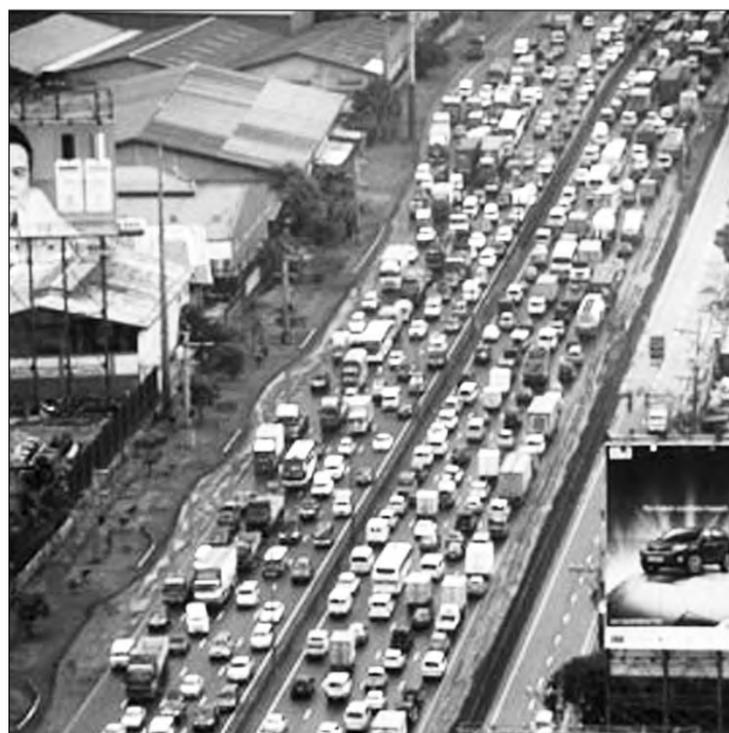
that was contemptuous. Besides it was completely wrong. The snarled traffic flow was the tip of the iceberg of infrastructure deficits.

His most correct response to the concern about urban vehicular movement might have been to assume personal responsibility for the problem, take the matter by the horns and put together a comprehensive plan for upgrading infra. That would have been out of character, however.

A few days ago, Palace spokesman Sonny Coloma was asked about the congestion at the ports. Like his boss, and like a complete clone, Coloma smugly replied that this is an indicator of our economy's progress.

It was not even a reply. It was a contemptuous quip, an attempt to spin a bad thing and make it appear like a good thing. All it tells us is that this administration considers every problem a matter of propaganda.

Meanwhile, the Port of Manila was choked with con-



tainers. Shipping companies, unable to unload at the Manila port, were dumping thousands of Philippine-bound containers in Hong Kong. Our factories were running short of raw materials and our hospitals short of vital medical supplies.

We have a logistics time-bomb in our hands and the Aquino administration was trying to finesse it away with blatant propaganda. Last Friday's snarl was just the first

explosion.

While we wait for the entire Mega Manila area to bog down, Palace propagandists are happily talking about the credit upgrades — which are really about the foreign currency reserves we are accumulating and not about forward-looking management of the economy. They are like Nero fiddling while Rome burned.

(continued on page 7)

LETTERS

DIVIDED WE FALL

In the August 30, 2014 issue of your paper, your editorial analysis of why Donna Mercado Kim lost to Mark Takai was somewhat surprising. You did not mention a very important reason -- the splintered or divided votes among Filipinos.

While the Japanese community votes were apparently solid behind Takai, the Filipino community votes were divided three ways between Kim, Espero, and Manahan. If only Kim were running against Takai and those votes for Espero and Manahan ended up going to her, she may just have had a chance. It was quite obvious that dividing the Filipino votes was not a wise thing to do at all. Moreover, the possible low voter turnout among the Filipino constituency may have developed due to sheer disgust of the splintering or disunity among Filipinos. Hopefully in the foreseeable future, the Filipinos would have learned something good from this.

The Filipinos could be a truly significant and powerful "swing vote" in Hawaii if only they could unify behind only one candidate. But of course, that is easier said than done.

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COVER STORY

THE STRESS OF MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

By HFC Staff

Tens of thousands of Hawaii-based soldiers have been tapped to cover a variety of global missions in various regions. These soldiers have conducted hundreds of missions from joint exercises and partnership training to quick-reaction forces and humanitarian assistance. Others have been deployed on longer missions in harm's way to hot spots in Iraq and Afghanistan.

While scientific studies have documented the mental health consequences for soldiers returning from deployment, the stress on families has only recently emerged as an important issue. Children and spouses especially, suffer from the emotional stress brought about before, during, and after deployment. Spouses who are left at home face financial challenges, loneliness, and additional parenting responsibilities. Children experience anxiety, behavioral problems and stress, often lasting years beyond the initial deployment.

A survey conducted of 1,137 military spouses in Hawaii by researcher Robert Blum showed that nearly 20 percent felt that deployment increased family strain and problems, with 33 percent noting that the problems were psychological.

Researchers also suspect

that prolonged separations can interfere with a child's process of attachment and bonding to a parent, potentially leading to significant child behavior problems.

Couples' Stories

Many Americans answered their country's call to serve during the global war on terror. Deployments were longer and more frequent than any other war in U.S. history, which led to marriages and families suffering.

Schofield-based soldier Rico Vioria (*name changed to protect identity) has been deployed twice to hot spots in Afghanistan, the most recent being last year for eight months. His wife Rachel says the deployment was extremely difficult for the couple, especially since she was expecting their first child at the time.

Rachel decided to keep

herself busy, immersing herself at work, going to the gym, finding new hobbies and preparing for their baby's arrival. As for bouts of loneliness, she was fortunate to have the support of family, friends and her church.

"Without them, I would have been depressed," she says. "They kept me pre-occupied and took me out to community events that were fun.

"My faith in God also helped see us through. We felt a lot better knowing that the Lord was there for us. Every single day during his deployment, we prayed constantly for his safety and quick return".

The couple also tried their best to communicate as often as possible online, especially via Skype. It wasn't always easy, consider the big demand among the enlisted soldiers when it came to using computers to connect with their fami-



lies back home.

"Depending on where the base is located, there might be a room with 5 to 10 computer laptops. But if you think about it, that's not much compared to the number of soldiers who are serving in the area," Rachel says.

Before they were married, Rico was deployed to Guam for several months.

"I was lucky when he was

in Guam because I was able to Skype with him everyday. I have friends whose husbands were deployed to the Middle East. They rarely got a chance to talk."

Rachel's friend Kim, whose husband is also in the Army, says their marriage teetered on the brink of divorce due to his deployment to Iraq. The couple ended up sep-

(continued on page 5)

S I D E B A R

Tips on Dealing With Deployment Stress

Hopelessness in the face of deployment is a common feeling. It's also a feeling you can do something about. The following are several helpful hints for those who may be struggling with the deployment of their spouse:

1. Take it one day at a time

Instead of concentrating on how long your spouse will be gone, try and focus your attention on taking things one day at a time, and when necessary, one moment at a time. By doing so, you may actually discover that the days pass rather quickly because you're focused on the here and now rather than on some distant date on the calendar.

2. Reduce your workload

For most spouses, their workload has in-



creased because of the deployment. However, there are numerous ways for you to cut back. For example, if you detest yard work and have the funds to do so, hire a teenager who may want to earn a few extra bucks to mow your lawn. Shopping in bulk is another way to lighten your workload. Stock up when you go to the commissary or grocery store and you'll be able to spread your shopping trips further apart, which means less running around on your part.

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VILMA D. FUENTES, Doctor of Physical Therapy

COVER STORY

(from page 4, THE STRESS ...)

arating for a five-year period and only recently decided to give it another try.

“I really didn’t understand or had any idea of what it’d be like to be in the military until I became an Army wife,” says Kim, who is Filipino and a graduate of Waipahu High School. “I don’t think military spouses are prepared for what’s to come.”

Their son was born while he was on deployment. In fact, the boy never met his dad until he was 2 years old. Kim admits that he wasn’t affected by his dad’s absence until he began school at age 3.

“That’s when he started being more aware that his daddy wasn’t around. He’d see other kids with both parents and wonder what happened to his dad,” she says.

Counseling

Junior Nieves (*not his real name) is an Army chaplain who has served two tours of duty to Kuwait and Afghanistan. He says that many soldiers also struggled to cope with the separation from their families. The number one



need for soldiers was to know that their families back home were okay.

During his deployment to Kuwait, Nieves was stationed at a military camp comprising about 4,000 soldiers and civilian personnel. He counseled up to 10 people per week, for routine symptoms to more serious conditions such as suicidal and homicidal thoughts. In Afghanistan, he traveled to various regions within the country with his battalion, visiting soldiers, counseling them and holding religious services.

“Much of the issues were loneliness, infidelity and other family issues back home and problems with their children,”

Nieves says.

“One way the soldiers dealt with loneliness was taking comfort in knowing that there were others who were going through the same thing. We were all there to support each other. You’re busy the entire time you’re deployed but if you focus on the mission and get into the routine, it helps.”

Coming Home

Before returning, soldiers are required to fill out surveys to assess their mental state of mind and to gauge the risk for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). If a red flag comes up, the Army’s medical unit

will conduct a follow-up with soldiers—but some do fall through the cracks.

For Rachel, her husband Rico voluntarily sought counseling for PTSD to help him control his outbursts. She feels that the stress of deployment has taken a toll on him.

“He’s easily awakened,” she says. “If I cough, he jumps

out of bed. Or I bump him, he’ll get up and get into a fighting position. He also suffers from sleep apnea, which he never had prior to joining the Army. He’s better now, but there are still times when he has his ‘bad nights’ if you want to call it that.”

Rachel feels that her husband’s situation would be worse if not for counseling. She has a friend whose husband almost choked her to death because of PTSD.

Overall, Rachel says there are “the perks and the pits” to being a military spouse.

“There are great perks,” she says. “We get commissary privileges, discounts and medical benefits. The pits are the sacrifice that families have to make when our husbands are away. It takes a toll on married life.”

SIDEBAR (from page 4.)

3. Ask for help

Many military spouses tend to avoid asking for help which often leads them to suffering in silence. Don’t put yourself through this. There’s no shame in seeking assistance when you need it. If you’re feeling overwhelmed, don’t hesitate to reach out to others and ask for help. Chances are, you’ll find plenty of individuals within the military and civilian community who are more than willing to lend a helping hand. Keep in mind that many people want to show their support for the troops and military families and are looking for ways to do just that. Being able to offer assistance to a military spouse whose husband/wife is deployed may actually be something that’s very meaningful to them.

4. Make time for you

Take a close look at your schedule. Can you find some time throughout the day or week that can be reserved just for you? Even setting aside a few minutes several times throughout the day is better than none at all. If you have young children, there are several military-sponsored respite and child care

programs that give spouses of deployed service members a break when they need one.

5. Be choosy about who you spend time with

Your time is valuable regardless of whether or not your spouse is deployed. But because of all the added demands placed on you during a deployment, your time is much more precious than ever. Think twice about spending it with negative individuals who always seem to complain about or someone to gossip about. Instead, opt to surround yourself with positive individuals—people who inspire you. Chances are, you’ll notice a big difference in your mood and energy levels.

6. It’s okay to say no

Many military spouses will go out of their way to lend a helping hand to their friends, family, co-workers and organizations that they’re affiliated with, often to the point of sacrificing their own health and well-being. Give yourself permission to intermittently say, “I’m sorry, I can’t.” Not being everyone’s saving grace 24/7 may end up being your saving grace.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Hawaii Knights of Rizal Recognized at the 5th USA Regional Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio

By HFC Staff

The 5th USA Regional Assembly of the Order of the Knights of Rizal was held on August 29-September 2, 2014 in Cleveland, Ohio. The biennial gathering was attended by delegates from the United States, Canada and the Philippines. The new Supreme Commander of the Order of the Knights of Rizal, Sir Jeremias "Jerry" Singson, KGCR, as well as the outgoing USA Regional Commander, Sir Tom Rodriguez, KGOR, were in attendance and presided over the assembly. The Hawaii Chapter was represented by Sir Jun Colmenares, KGOR, Area Commander for Western USA, and Sir Arnold Villafuerte, KCR, Hawaii Chapter Commander.

Highlights of the assembly included reports by the outgoing Regional Commander and by the new Supreme Commander, a tour of the Filipino-



Deputy Regional Commander for the United States, Sir Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, KGOR, with the Regional Commander for the United States, Sir Francis Sison, KGOR, of New Jersey.

American Community Center and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum, a dinner/cruise, an educational forum on leadership, an evening gala, the official announcement of the newly appointed officers of the USA and Canada regional commands, and the awards ceremony.

An all-day educational forum on leadership was held on August 31, 2014. Among the speakers were the two Hawaii delegates. Sir Jun Colmenares presented on the

topic "Self-Awareness: Key to Effective Leadership," while Sir Arnold Villafuerte talked about "The Qualities of an Effective Leader and Their Relevance to Rizal's Moral Legacy." Both presentations were very well received.

The new Supreme Commander announced the newly appointed officers of the USA and Canada regions during his speech at the gala night. Appointed as the new Regional Commander for the United States Region was Sir Francis Sison, KGOR, of New Jersey.

Also appointed as the new Deputy Regional Commander for the United States Region was Sir Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, KGOR, of Hawaii. In addition, appointed as the new Area Commander for Hawaii Western USA was Sir Raymund Liongson, KGOR. The officers will serve for the term 2014 to 2016.

Sir Serafin "Jun" Colmenares is past commander of the Hawaii Chapter, past deputy area commander for Hawaii Western USA, and past area commander for Western USA. Sir Raymund Liongson is past commander of the Hawaii Chapter. Both were co-chairs of the 4th USA Regional Assembly and Conference held in Honolulu last 2012, and co-editors of the book "Rizal's Legacy and Nation-Building" (2013). They also currently serve as Trustees of the Hawaii Chapter.

The Supreme Commander also requested for a motion from the assembly to pass a

resolution in support of the Order's official stand opposing the continued construction of the "Torre de Manila", a high-rise that is being built at the back of the Rizal Monument in Manila. The structure is not only considered an eyesore and destroys the view of the Rizal Monument but is also seen as an affront to, and a desecration of, the memory of the Philippines' national hero. Upon motion made by Sir Jun Colmenares and duly seconded, the assembly unanimously approved the resolution. The resolution, as written and endorsed by both the USA and Canadian regional leaderships, not only supports the Order's stand but also calls upon the Philippine government to stop the construction and tear down the structure.

Awards and exaltations to higher degrees were given during the final day of the assembly. Among those from Hawaii who were given distin-

(continued on page 9)

DOE Approves Revised Pono Choices Curriculum

The State Department of Education has approved an updated version of the Pono Choices sexual health curriculum for optional use by middle schools, following changes

made by its developers at the University of Hawaii-Manoa Center on Disability Studies (UHM-CDS).

Hawaii's middle schools are required to provide a comprehensive, abstinence-based

sexual health education that follows the requirements set forth in state law and State Board of Education (BOE) policy, and aligns with the state's health education standards. However, principals may choose to implement any one of seven DOE approved sexual health curricula.

In June 2014, the DOE released a report detailing recommendations to improve its sexual health curriculum and halted the use of Pono Choices until UHM-CDS addressed the report. The recommendations were drawn from the work of a diverse Stakeholder Review Panel and public feedback. Recently, a revised version of Pono Choices was reviewed and approved.

State Rep. Bob McDermott objected to the curriculum which he said contained "a slew of bogus and misleading information that the chief proponents of the program, Planned Parenthood, passed

off as science."

"The DOE should stick to teaching human reproduction in the context of health education classes, where students learn actual science and useful risk prevention skills," he says. "Any departure from long-accepted norms should receive broad parental approval."

The changes include: a revised definition of sex and the genital area; new emphasis on the dangers of unprotected anal sex; and elimination of confusing language about condom effectiveness rates. Additional changes were made to the script and materials for the required parent informational night to give parents more detailed information about the language and scenarios used in the curriculum.

No student is required to participate in sexual health education. In June, the DOE strengthened the role of parents in this decision by chang-

ing its policy from an "opt-out" to an "opt-in." Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, all parents must sign an opt-in form permitting their children to participate in sexual health education.

"For many families, sexual health education is a sensitive issue. The changes to the curriculum and parent night materials, along with our revised policy requiring parents to opt-in instead of opt-out, strengthen their role in the process of sexual education," says Ronn Nozoe, DOE deputy superintendent. "It is still necessary and important to provide students with a strong health education that helps them make informed choices about their futures."

Questions about the Pono Choices curriculum or requests for copies of the curriculum or materials should be directed to UHM-CDS at <http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/po-nochoices/contact-us/>.



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IMMIGRATION GUIDE

Wednesday Morning Amnesty for Illegal Aliens?



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

President Obama announced on Saturday that he plans to put off executive action on immigration until after the midterm elections on Tuesday, November 4. “Executive action” means the President will enact immigration rules and regulations by himself without congressional action.

So on Wednesday morning, November 5, expect the President to unveil (unleash?) his “executive action”. Many believe that he will grant amnesty to the estimated 12 million illegal aliens in the United States. Of course he will not call it “amnesty”. That word generates strong negative reaction from law abiding citizens. He will probably call it “path to citizenship,” or “deferred action for humanitarian reasons” or something palatable.

Why will the President do that? Politics. Imagine 12 million new Democratic voters. The Democrats will control the country.

Why is the President postponing his “executive action”? Politics. If he does it before the November midterm elections, the majority of the American people who are against amnesty will be so angry that they will go to the polls to vote against the Democratic senatorial candidates. Republicans will thus win at least 6 senatorial seats thereby enabling them to control the Senate.

Can the president grant amnesty to illegal aliens? This President can do anything he wants. Who can challenge him? He has already demonstrated the power of “executive action” in the field of immigration when, after Congress refused to grant amnesty to children brought here illegally by their parents, he told his underlings to create a program called “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” (DACA), thereby defying congressional will. Under DACA such children can remain in the United States, get work permits, study, get driver’s licenses, Obamacare and welfare benefits, and do everything that a lawful permanent resident can do. The President’s backers call it “prosecutorial discretion”.



Under this theory, the prosecutor, in this case the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), can exercise its discretion whether or not to prosecute or deport such illegal aliens. But prosecutorial discretion is to be exercised on a case by case basis based on national interest and on the equities presented by the alien, not on a wholesale basis. In DACA, prosecutorial discretion was exercised on a wholesale basis. That is abuse of discretion.

If the president uses the DACA model to give “amnesty” to the 12 million illegal aliens, they will not be deported but will also be given work permits, Obamacare benefits, welfare benefits, driver’s licenses, and enjoy other benefits that lawful permanent residents have. If you have all those things, who cares about status, who cares about citizenship?

If that happens, woe unto the Filipinos, especially in Hawaii who are working in such jobs as hotel housekeepers, landscapers, and in similar jobs. The amnestied aliens will swarm Hawaii with its good weather and beautiful scenery and compete with them. Employers are likely to hire these amnestied aliens because they will accept lower pay.

If I were president (I am not going to say “If I were Obama” because I do not want to be like Obama), and I really cared about immigrants, especially those who abide by the law, like most Filipinos, I would –

--allow the over-aged children of lawful immigrants to enjoy the same priority date as their parents and immigrate with them to the United States.

--allow beneficiaries of approved immigrant visa petitions who are waiting for the availability of their visa num-

bers (many for over 20 years) to come to the United States as non-immigrants and wait for their immigrant visas to become available.

--include the Philippines in the visa waiver program so that Filipinos can come to the United States without a visa for six months, visit relatives and friends, see the United States, spend money and improve the economy.

But as pointed out by a Filipino habitue at the daily “kapihan” at Jack in the Box in Honolulu, the Obama administration seems to care more about illegal aliens than legal immigrants.

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 is originally from Laoag City and Magsingal, Ilocos Sur. Atty. Tipon specializes in immigration law and criminal defense. He served as an immigration officer and co-authored “Immigration Law Service, 1st ed.,” an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. His radio program airs Thursdays at 7:30 am on KNDI 1270 AM. He can be reached via mail at: 800 Bethel St., Suite 402, Honolulu, HI 96813, by telephone at (808) 225-2645 or by e-mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. For more on Atty. Tipon, go online to: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice.

OPINION (from page 3, CRISIS)

Intercepted

Sen. Nancy Binay discovered that among the funds intercepted, converted into savings and disbursed as additional pork (allegedly to help convict Chief Justice Corona) was a P4.5 billion appropriation for the upgrade of the MRT. That money might have gone a long way to spare commuters the cruel and unusual punishment of riding the rail service these days.

Clearly, Aquino and his man Butch Abad did not consider upgrading the MRT an urgent matter — or at least not as urgent as extracting Justice Corona from the Court. Because they did not upgrade the MRT when they needed to, the commuter rail line is now the decrepit and dangerous service it had become.

Had this administration understood the importance of building Northrail, last Friday’s horror might not have happened. It would be a simple matter of extending the rails to the port, enabling containers to be taken out of the city on flatbeds.

Manila is probably the only city in the world where there is no rail service to take out cargo from the port. Instead we use scarce city streets to roll out cargo on large container vans. The port congestion translates into road congestion.

If this administration acted promptly on the NLEX-SLEX connector road, it would be operational by now. That would have taken a substantial load off Edsa.

If this administration did

not whimsically junk the Belgian-assisted Laguna Lake project, we would have had both a dike and a circumferential road by now. What we have, instead, is an international arbitration case where we will pay out billions for nothing.

If this administration did not so stupidly junk the French-assisted port modernization project, we would have had added options for moving cargo by now. Instead, we have a pile-up at the piers.

This administration showed no foresight in anticipating our logistical needs and no sense of urgency in closing the infra gap. Our choked and flooded streets will be its lasting legacy.

(www.philstar.com)

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TRAVEL & LEISURE

A WEEK IN PROVENCE

CRAZY QUILT by Tanya T. Lara

O It is only on our third day in France, at around 7 p.m., that I finally understand what this light is all about. Awash in a golden glow, everything looks exaggerated including the color of the soil.

It's as if a painter had taken his paintbrush and let the bristles kiss the top of the lavender fields in Provence, touching just the tips of the flowers with color, and then dipping it in his paint again and brushing the fields one more time, or perhaps even twice.

The soil is now reddish brown, the lavender flowers brighter and deeper in color, and in the distance the tree beside a farmhouse looks greener.

It is what the painters call "the clarity of light" and the famous ones all passed through this region of Southern France at different periods and for different lengths of time — Van Gogh, Cezanne, Matisse, Renoir and Picasso.

Van Gogh was perhaps the most famous for setting his easel in Provence. He stayed here for two years and those paintings were the ones that made him famous after his death, including "Starry Night." He painted feverishly in Arles and perhaps even more so in his year at the asylum of St. Remy de Provence.

I am standing in the same light on these fields in the village of Valensole, staring at a farmhouse with a tree beside it. I have never been here before but this dreamy scene looks so familiar, as if I was looking at myself looking at the tree.

Then I realize that a cur-

sory search of "lavender fields in Provence" will most likely turn up Valensole, along with the Note-Dame de Sénanque Abbey in Gordes.

We could have easily missed the peak of the lavender blooms had we arrived a week earlier or missed them entirely as they were going to be harvested days later, but we did not. We arrived just in time in Paris several days before — on the morning, in fact, that a plane from the same airline we took was shot down over Ukraine. After taking the train to Avignon the next day we — CV Travel & Tours Corporation president Claudette Vitug, Steven Villacin and I — began our journey through Provence.

"Like the cherry blossoms in Japan or the tulips in the Netherlands, lavender season often depends on the year's weather," says Claudette, who has been in the travel industry for 23 years. "This year, the middle of July is the best time to travel because at the end of the month they are going to be harvested; in June they were not in full bloom yet."

As far as you can see are rows and rows of lavender and the fields are "clean," without wild grass. If you stand south of it, you will see some fields have already been harvested — only shrubs are left behind — and the flowers are on their way to the many distilleries in the region, their essence to be infused into toiletries such as perfumes, soaps, shower gels, lotions, and even in food like tea, honey, macarons, breads and biscotti.

And yet there are hardly people here on the Valensole plateau. In Banon and Manosque, you can spot tourist buses parked on the side of the



Notre-Dame de Sénanque Abbey in Gordes: The abbey is usually the first stop on a lavender tour of Provence if you're coming from Paris via Avignon.

roads with visitors (mostly from Mainland China) stopping by to take pictures deep into the fields.

Our discovery of these fields was by serendipity. We were on our way to Moustiers Sainte-Marie, a town in the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, when we saw the farmhouse. In Moustiers, a town that is seemingly wedged between gorges, we take a walk around after a late lunch. It is a quiet place that specializes in ceramics and outdoor sports. Tourist shops offer white-water rafting, hiking, and mountain climbing.

So after Moustiers, we drive back to the plateau.

The night before, I was on Skype with my friend Gautier, a Frenchman originally from the north of France and now living abroad, and I told him we were going to Valensole the next day.

He said, "Pourquoi?"

I said, "For the lavender fields."

There was silence, then, "D'accord."

His "okay" sounded more like "But why?"

It is not only I that experienced this. Even Claudette and Steven were asked the same thing by their French friends on why they were going to Provence. It seems to confuse French people — especially those from Paris or those not from Southern France — that people would take the trouble to cross the Atlantic Ocean to look at lavender flowers. It was so ordinary to them, these fields — as ordinary as our green rice fields are to us.

From Moustiers, we get back to Valensole at sunset.

There is no one else around. In this most gorgeous of hours, in this wildly colorful swath of land, I want to tell him: This is why.

The easiest way to go to Provence is to take the train from Gare de Lyon in Paris to Avignon, a two-and-half-hour journey. Avignon itself is a lovely town with a bustling art scene. We happened to catch the theater festival for the summer, so the Medieval walls of the center are literally plastered with posters promoting more than a hundred plays, musicals and shows. There are contemporary plays alongside the classics by Shakespeare, Molière and Camus, but unfortunately, everything is in French.

July is a lively time to be in Avignon. The actors perform on the streets in full costume, entertaining visitors having lunch, or just positioning themselves in alleys or outside the medieval ramparts. The shops are all open, selling souvenirs, colorful jewelry pieces made by local artists, and summer clothing.

As lively as it is today, it was home to seven successive Popes during the Avignon Papacy hundreds of years ago, hence the center includes the Palace of the Popes, the cathedral and the Pont d'Avignon or Avignon Bridge.

From Avignon, go east to the Notre-Dame de Sénanque Abbey in Gordes. The abbey is usually the first stop for people chasing lavender. It is a community of Cistercian monks that have opened their fields to the public for free.

A tour inside the abbey needs to be booked online

(again it's only in French) as it is scheduled every hour and for a fee. Even if you understand very little of the language or none at all, it's interesting to see the architecture inside and to know the Cistercian way of life.

The Cistercian monasteries across Europe were founded 900 years ago starting in Burgundy and were situated in remote places. The Sénanque Abbey is located at the bottom of the valley in Gordes for this reason and it is ironic that today it is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Provence.

The monks are secluded in their dormitory and go about their life of continual prayer, beginning at 2 a.m. when they do their first religious ceremony of the day. The Abbey does offer residential retreats to the public (except in January and February, and for a maximum of only eight days) for a modest fee and guests take their meals with the monks (eaten in silence because they follow St. Benedict's vows).

Further east of Gordes is the town of Apt, whose open market is the biggest of the Luberon markets and has been ongoing for hundreds of years. It offers food, local products, clothes, gorgeous tablecloths, flowers, toiletries, and many other things. Here we buy all sorts of things: paella, espadrilles, hats, spices and saucissons.

From Apt, our next destination is Banon, and we discover it is going to host the Tour de France on the same day we are planning to join the Lavender Festival in Valensole.

It is an easy choice for us. We came for lavender, this beautiful, fragrant plant of 39 species. But it isn't the only flower here. Sometimes we spot a field of sunflowers, as tall as people, the flowers facing the sun and, in places where it is overcast, they are bowed as if in shame.

It is raining when we get to the Valensole festival on a Sunday morning.

"Lá-bas," we are told. Over there.

(continued on page 10)

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CANDID PERSPECTIVES

Thirteen Years After 9/11—The Call for Airstrikes Demands Debate



By Emil Guillermo

George Bush made a big mistake with 9/11. He used it to justify the U.S. going into a war with Iraq, even though Iraq was not the perpetrator of the 9/11 terror attacks.

The properly blame falls on the shoulders of Osama bin-Laden and Al-Qaida.

13 years later, it seems that President Obama is making the same mistake, using the emotional power of 9/11 to bring us to the brink of war?

Yes, 9/11 evokes powerful memories of unity. But we shouldn't let that manipulate us.

Indeed, as I write this, President Obama, on the day before the 13th anniversary of 9/11, is about to authorize airstrikes on ISIS in Syria, according to published reports.

The president isn't seeking Congressional approval. He's pretty much doing it on his own. The U.S. has already

conducted limited air strikes on Iraq, but not Syria. And that only compounds the overall regional problem considering the civil war in that country.

13 years later, it's hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys.

Even the terrorists have changed and reconfigured. And just to be clear, ISIS, the Sunni militant group known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, isn't Al-Qaida (the force behind 9/11).

From all accounts, ISIS is much worse, a more organized and thus greater threat than Al-Qaida, and much better financed.

In other words, ISIS wasn't responsible for 9/11, but they are very capable of a sequel.

The beheading of two journalists is just a horrific preamble.

Do we get behind the president wholeheartedly? Even those of us with pacifist tendencies?

Once the president authorizes air strikes, the public will hope that we are in a video



game war and the words "game over" quickly flash on the screen.

But likely, this will be just the start of a much longer engagement. We almost certainly will have to consider "boots on the ground." Our young men and women will have to enter. As "advisors" only?

The U.S. has had a terrible history in the region. We've seen boots on the ground, then removed. Our leaders have cried out, "Mission accomplished," and then sent them back in for clean-up. They're re-deployed, then yanked again too soon.

ment. Like a few well timed smacks on the head. But this is a region that considers airstrikes child's play. The Middle East is a region where they don't have the NFL. They play war for real. For hundreds of years at a time.

Airstrikes from Obama? It may just be Obama running out the clock until his lame duckness is over. And then a new president will have to consider a more serious plan.

To be in a better position overall, the debate really needs to start now. Mid-term politics may not allow it, but the people should be demanding it.

If history is our guide, we know what happens.

After the airstrikes come the boots on the ground.

They are our sons and daughters. For their sake, our voices need to be heard.

But that can only happen if Congress is involved in the process to a far greater degree immediately

The announcement of airstrikes on the eve of a 9/11 anniversary is a call for debate on the broader issue: Is it possible to keep a limited U.S. mission from turning into an all-out war?

The yo-yo may be a great Filipino weapon. But it makes for a lousy military strategy.

There is only one way we should proceed in the next iteration of engagement.

The president must make sure that Congress is involved every step of the way.

This seems to trouble a few members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. They tend to feel that any military vote could upset the results of the upcoming mid-term elections.

But money will be needed to fund whatever happens next. Airstrikes plus? \$500 million?

We already know that Iraq has cost us more than \$3.5 trillion according to Nobel economist Joseph Stiglitz. We know this won't be cheap.

Maybe Obama thinks airstrikes will limit involve-

EMIL GUILLERMO, an award-winning journalist and winner of an American Book Award, was an editorial board member of the Honolulu Advertiser.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS (from page 6, HAWAII KNIGHTS)

guished service awards were the following:

Distinguished Service (Gold) Cross

- Sir Serafin Colmenares Jr., KGOR
- Sir Raymund Liongson, KGOR
- Sir Clement Bautista, KCR

Distinguished Service (Silver) Star

- Sir Ben Sanchez, KGOR
- Sir Geminiano Arre, KCR
- Sir Arnold Villafuerte, KCR

Distinguished Service Medal

- Sir Felipe Tan, KOR
- Sir Darwin Arellano, KOR
- Sir Richard Ancog, KOR

These awards will be formally conferred (on those who could not make it to the regional assembly) as part of the



Sirs Jun Colmenares and Arnold Villafuerte with the new Supreme Commander of the Knights of Rizal, Sir Jeremias "Jerry" Singson, KGCR (center, sitting), the outgoing USA Regional Commander Sir Tom Rodriguez of Arizona (left, sitting), and other knights.

ceremonies during the upcoming Dr. Jose Rizal Award Gala sponsored by the Knights of Rizal-Hawaii Chapter on October 11, 2014 at the Pacific Club in downtown Honolulu.

Also conferred a Lifetime Membership was Sir Arnold Villafuerte, KCR, along with some members from other ju-

risdictions.

The next USA Regional Assembly will take place in September 2016, either in Jacksonville, Florida or in New Jersey, while the next International Assembly will be held on February 19-22, 2015 in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Philippines.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

**Commission on Filipinos
 Overseas Accepting
 Nominations for MAM Awards**

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) for the Celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos and International Migrants Day in the Philippines is accepting nominations for the 2014 Migration Advocacy and Media (MAM) Awards.

The MAM Awards recognize the significant role of the media in information dissemination and advocacy of news and concerns related to migration and development.

Nominees must have raised public awareness on issues on Filipino migration, advocated the cause of Filipinos overseas and promoted a positive image of Filipinos overseas.

Since the first MAM Awards were held in 2011, a total of 31 awardees have been recognized for their role in tackling migration concerns in celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos in December.

The MAM Awards consist of six categories—Print Journalism, Radio Journalism, Television Journal, Film Media, Interactive Media and Advertisement.

Nominations must be mailed before October 15, 2014 to: MAM Awards Secretariat, Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Citigold Center, 1345 Pres. Quirino Avenue cor. Osmeña Highway (South Superhighway) Manila, Philippines 1007.

The winners will be announced before November 30, 2014. The MAM Awards ceremony will be held during the annual celebration of the International Migrants Day in the Philippines—on or before December 18, 2014.

For more information on the Awards, please email the MAM Awards Secretariat at: mamawards@cfo.gov.ph. To download nomination forms, go online to: www.cfo.gov.ph.

**USDA Declares Big Island as
 Disaster Area**

Thomas Vilsack, secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has designated Hawaii County as a primary natural disaster area, allowing farmers to access emergency loans in the wake of the destruction caused last month by Tropical Storm Iselle.

U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono applauded USDA's declaration.

"Federal resources are urgently needed to help our farmers and access to emergency loans is an important option for farmers as they work to recover. I will continue to fight for federal resources to support communities, small businesses and families," she says.

Much of the Big Island's agricultural sector, including papayas, macadamia, coffee and the floriculture and nursery industry, sustained damage from Tropi-



cal Storm Iselle. Papaya farmers suffered the most severe loss, with an estimated 60 percent of papaya production statewide lost at a price of over \$50 million. Many of the papaya farmers are small, family operations that do not have catastrophic crop insurance.

A disaster declaration allows the USDA Farm Service Agency to offer emergency loans to supplement USDA's other available loan options. In order to qualify for emergency loans, producers must still meet specific eligibility requirements and meet security requirements as well as demonstrate the ability to repay the loan.

TRAVEL & LEISURE (from page 8, A WEEK...)

We walk from the muddy parking lot to the small buses that take people to the town center where the streets are closed to vehicular traffic. Everyone in this town and its surrounding areas, it seems, is out selling lavender-infused goods.

They are giving out stalks of lavender for free. We rub the flowers between our hands and inhale. They smell wonderful, the whole place smells wonderful.

There are other places we visit after the festival, such as Manosque, Aix-en-Provence, Les Baux de Provence (where

we see a wonderful light production of Gustav Klimt's art) and Marseilles, before returning to Paris.

But every place after the festival — the hotel rooms, the rented car, the restaurants — we leave behind by accident small clusters of flowers on floor, which had fallen off from the stalks they gave us during the festival in Valensole.

It's as if Provence is saying goodbye to us slowly, one lavender flower at a time. Or us saying goodbye to Provence. (www.philstar.com)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

APEC to Tackle Port Congestion, Corruption

from www.philstar.com
 Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - Maritime disputes are not on the agenda.

But congestion in shipping ports and corruption are among the regional problems that the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum is expected to tackle as APEC leaders gather for their annual summit this year in Beijing and then in Manila in 2015.

Robert Wang, the US State Department's senior official for APEC, said yesterday that Washington is giving priority to Asia-Pacific cooperation in improving "supply chain connectivity" and fighting "cross-border bribery."

Briefing a small group of journalists yesterday at the US embassy here, Wang admitted experiencing heavy traffic in Metro Manila and said it could be a problem when the Philip-

pines hosts the APEC summit next year.

But he added, "I think it will be a problem that the government will try to address... I'm quite sure the Philippines has the ability to do that."

Wang has been meeting with Philippine officials since arriving in Manila Sunday night. Asked if maritime disputes involving China and its neighbors were on the US agenda at APEC, he replied, "The answer is no."

He said the issue is considered political, which the 21-member APEC does not tackle. Maritime security, including freedom of navigation in shipping lanes, is instead taken up at the East Asia Summit.

Wang, who met yesterday morning with members of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and over lunch with Laura del Rosario, foreign affairs undersecretary for international economic relations, said port



logistics problems were plaguing not only the Philippines but also several other countries in the region.

He said that in 2010, APEC set a goal of reducing by 10 percent the cost of moving goods by 2015. With the annual average cost placed at \$1.4 trillion, this will mean savings of \$140 billion.

But preliminary studies have shown that "we haven't improved things as much," Wang said.

He said the US has put up \$1 million and Australia and two other countries another \$1 million to finance a study identifying where the problems lie and assist APEC economies in dealing with the problem, such as by improv-

ing Customs procedures.

Next year, Wang said, "there will be a report card" for the Philippines, which is seeing the worst congestion in the Port of Manila and massive traffic gridlocks.

Wang noted that APEC, which was founded in 1989, is on track in its goals on tariff reduction and regional free trade, so the focus has shifted to non-tariff barriers in areas such as Customs and logistics - "more on ease of doing business."

Corruption, another problem in several APEC economies, will be tackled in coordination with the Securities and Exchange Commission and anti-money laundering authorities.

Last year at the APEC gathering in the Indonesian island resort of Bali, a regional Anti-Corruption Network was formally set up. The first meeting of the network will be held in Beijing at the APEC gathering this November.

The idea, Wang said, is to start regional sharing of information on cross-border bribery, wherein corrupt officials or private individuals take assets out of one economy and move them into another.

APEC is looking at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations agencies and economies such as Hong Kong, which have effec-

tive anti-corruption programs, for best practices that can be incorporated into the Asia-Pacific fight against cross-border bribery, Wang said.

Other items high on the US agenda at the APEC summit are environmental issues including inefficient fuel subsidies and cleaning up oceans, giving women a greater economic role and expanding study and internship programs overseas within Asia-Pacific.

The first APEC leaders' summit was hosted by the United States under then President Bill Clinton on Blake Island in Washington state in 1993. The summit became an annual gathering, with the Philippines hosting it in 1996.

The idea for an Asia-Pacific grouping was first broached publicly in January 1989 by Bob Hawke, at the time the prime minister of Australia, during a speech in Seoul, South Korea.

Twelve Asia-Pacific economies later met in Canberra, Australia to set up APEC: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and the US.

In 1991, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan joined APEC, followed by Mexico and Papua New Guinea in 1993 and Chile the next year. In 1998, Peru, Russia and Vietnam joined APEC.

House OKs Bill Exempting 13 Month Pay from Income Tax

by **Paolo Romero**
 Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - The House of Representatives approved on second reading yesterday a bill that exempts the 13th month pay and other bonuses of workers up to P70,000 from income tax.

House Bill 4970 was a consolidation of 11 bills that seek to amend Section 32 of the National Internal Revenue Code.

Marikina City Rep. Romero Quimbo, chairman of the House ways and means committee and sponsor of the measure, said the chamber's leadership decided to speed up passage of the bill, which the panel approved only last week.

"There's no reason to delay it," he said. "This will help boost purchasing power and sustain the economy."

The bill is expected to be approved on third and final reading next week.



Officials of the Department of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue opposed the measure during the deliberations on the bill, citing loss of government revenues.

Quimbo, however, said the increased exemption would be good for the economy and government coffers as the increased purchasing power will result in more purchases of goods and services, as well as savings.

He said the panel would also work on raising exemp-

tions for individual and corporate income taxes.

"We cannot let the BIR squeeze blood from our ordinary workers and fixed-income earners, when there are those they have to run after first," he said.

He said individual taxpayers whose payments are automatically withheld comprise only 16 percent of the estimated taxpaying population, but they contribute to 85 percent of the collections.

(www.philstar.com)



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Cooking Adobo

by Rick Olivares

Of there is one dish that is a quintessentially Filipino, it's adobo. Marinated in a variety of sauces, the meat is stewed to brown perfection making every bite a mouthful of flavors.

Although the dish makes use of a Spanish name, adobo was already around in pre-colonial Philippines when 16th century native Filipinos utilized vinegar and soy sauce to preserve meats. Only when the Spaniards did arrive did they give a name to the dish that they too eventually

adapted into their cuisine.

In my own home, adobo is on the weekly menu once a week. I love it. My kids love it and so does our dog. I guess that is how much it is a favorite. Even living abroad, when looking for a Filipino restaurant, invariably, adobo is something I almost always order.

While writing this story, I sampled the dish at Café Ysabel where according to Chef Gino Gonzales, it remains a best seller.

Cooking adobo the classic way

It starts off by sautéing

onions and garlic then adding the meat and slowly browning it. When the meat changes in color you can start putting patis & vinegar. I let the vinegar evaporate first before mixing it around. A good amount of cracked black pepper is added as well. When it dries up and crust starts to form at the bottom, you deglaze the pan by adding stock or water to loosen the crust (fonds) then it adheres to the meat, thus helping in the browning process. This is done until the meat is tender and brown. To finish, the meat is taken out then more stock or water is added to deglaze the pan and



the sauce is formed. This is served on the side.

If that is the classic way of cooking it, then what innovations are there for the dish?

"There's the addition of foreign spices to start off," said Chef Gene. "There are even versions with foie gras now. Adobo flakes has be-

come very popular. The use of foreign vinegar as acid like balsamic or raspberry. Adobo as a dish is pretty established and popular now that's why there are a lot of attempts to re-interpret this dish into beautifully plated sometimes deconstructed dishes." (www.philstar.com)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Unemployment Rate Drops as 1M Jobs Created Over a Year

by Jovan Cerda
Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - With over 1 million jobs created over a year, the country's jobless rate declined to 6.7 percent in July 2014, down from the 7.3 percent registered a year ago, the Philippine Statistical Authority (PSA) reported on Wednesday.

Data from the July 2014 Labor Force Survey (LFS) showed that 93.3 percent of the country's labor force (aged 15 and above) have jobs, an improvement from the 7.3 percent posted last year. The National Economic and Development Authority noted that the number of employed Filipinos rose by 2.8 percent to 38.5 million in July 2014 from 37.4 million in July 2013. This translates to 1.06 million jobs created over a year.

The underemployment rate similarly went down, dropping to 18.3 percent from last year's

19.2 percent. Employed workers in need of additional jobs or hours of work in their current jobs are considered underemployed, PSA noted.

Data from the state agency showed that three regions had employment rates lower than the national average. These are the National Capital Region (89.7 percent), Central Luzon (91.7 percent) and CALABARZON (92 percent).

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) also went up to 64.4 percent in July 2014 compared to 63.9 percent a year ago. This means the labor market absorbed 879,000 labor entrants, expanding the labor force to 41.23 million.

"To some extent, the growth in the LFPR reflects the more positive outlook of workers in line with the momentum created by the robust economic growth in recent years, along with the expectations of better employment," said Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ar-

senio Balisacan.

Balisacan said the Aquino administration should continue fostering an economic climate conducive to business and investment to sustain the recent gains in the labor market.

"In industry, the key objective should be to increase investment, especially in labor-intensive sectors, and to encourage the existing pool of employers to hire more workers. In the immediate term, the demand for labor can be driven by the infrastructure program of government, reconstruction activities in the Visayas and other disaster-hit areas, and private construction. In services, the focus must be on increasing sales and clients enough to warrant the hiring of workers. There is much room for expansion in business-process management and tourism-related activities," he added.

In agriculture, Balisacan said there is a need to introduce non-farm employment oppor-

tunities during the off-season, such as value-adding activities and community-based employment programs. This would address the seasonal and low-paying jobs in the sector, he said.

"To further support the labor market performance in the medium term, the government should remain vigilant to attendant risks to growth and make sure that pre-emptive measures and programs are in

place to mitigate any adverse effects of such risks or shocks in the economy," he added.

PSA noted that the July 2014 LFS did not include employment data from Leyte, because of the large number of households displaced by typhoon Yolanda last year. The 7.3-percent jobless rate in July 2013 also excluded data from the typhoon-ravaged province to make the estimates comparable. (www.philstar.com)

Phil, US Troops to Hold Naval Exercises

from www.philstar.com
Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2014

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - Thousands of troops from the Philippines and the United States will stage naval exercises in western and northern Philippines later this month, a military official said Tuesday.

Philippine Navy Public Affairs Officer Lieutenant Commander Marineth Domingo said some 2,700 Philippine and US troops will participate in the Philippine-US Amphibious Landing Exercise (PHIBLEX) which will run from September

29 to October 10.

"The exercise is meant to improve the interoperability and combat readiness of Philippine and US troops, improve relations of the two militaries and enhance security cooperation in the region," said Domingo.

She said training activities will be held in various areas in the provinces of Palawan and Zambales.

Philippine and US troops will also pursue humanitarian activities, including medical missions and the construction of school buildings. (www.philstar.com)

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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Visa Processing Fee Changes Take Effect September 12

A new schedule of fees for a number of consular services will go into effect on September 12, 2014. Every year the Department of State (DOS) reviews the cost of services and the new fees more accurately reflect the costs to the Department for providing these services.

Immigrant processing fee for employment-based visa application will decrease by \$60 from \$405 to \$345 while the fee for family-based visa application will increase by \$95 from \$230 to \$325. The increase in processing fee for family-based immigrant visa is based on the August 2013 cost-

of-service model update which shows that visa processing for this category costs more than other categories. All other immigrant visa applications will decrease from \$220 to \$205.

The nonimmigrant visa processing fee for Treaty Investors (E-1) and Trade (E-2) visas will decrease by \$65 from \$270 down to \$205. The fee for Fiancé(e) (K) visas will increase by \$25 from \$240 to \$265. The fee for Border Crossing Card for Mexican citizen minor applicants under the age of 15 will increase by \$1 from \$15 to \$16. Fees for all other categories of nonimmigrant visa processing will remain the same.

The fee for determining returning resident status will decrease from \$275 to \$180. The fee for waiver of the two-year residence requirement for J-1

visa holders will also drop from \$215 to \$120. The affidavit of support fee, on the other hand, will increase by \$32 from \$88 to \$120.

The fee for administrative processing of formal renunciation of U.S. citizenship will increase to \$2,350 which is five times more the current fee of \$450. The increase is largely due to the substantial amount of time consular officers spend to accept, process, and adjudicate these requests.

The charge for consular time or fee for services performed outside normal business hours will be lowered from \$231 to \$135.

The proposed fees were published in the Federal Register on August 28, 2014 and will take effect September 12 or 15 days from publication. Applicants will have to pay the fee in

effect on the day of payment. Individuals availing of American Citizen Services at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate are required to pay the fees on the date the services are delivered. They cannot pay the fees in advance.

For immigrant visa applicants, they will pay the fee printed on the fee bill they receive from the National Visa Center. Immigrant visa receipts are valid for one year.

For nonimmigrant visa applicants, they will be charged the processing fee in effect on the date of payment. Payment of nonimmigrant fees is generally made in advance of the appointment. Where there is an increase in the processing fee, receipts for payments made 90 days prior to September 12 or through December 11, 2014 will still be accepted and the applicant does not need to pay for the

difference. After that date, however, the applicant will have to pay the balance when he appears for his appointment.

If the processing fee for the visa category declines and the applicant paid prior to September 12, he will not be entitled to a refund.

The last time the processing fees were increased was two years ago. The fee changes are based on the Department of State's latest cost-of-service study. The DOS estimates that it will process more than 11 million nonimmigrant visa applications and around 600,000 immigrant visa applications for fiscal year 2014.

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

MAINLAND NEWS

Fil-Am Teen Who Climbed World Trade Spire Ends Sentence

NEW YORK — A criminal case against a thrill-seeking teenager who climbed the World Trade Center's centerpiece tower was closed Wednesday with a community-service sentence he'd already completed.

After a stunt that spotlighted lapses at one of the nation's most security-conscious locales, 16-year-old Filipino-American Justin Casquejo did his required 23 days of service—and six extra ones—plus two sessions of youth counseling, Manhattan Criminal Court Judge Felicia Menin said.

"The court is impressed by your sincerity, remorsefulness and willingness to accept responsibility for your conduct," she said.

Casquejo and his lawyer declined to speak at the sentencing or outside court. Casquejo pleaded guilty in July to breaking a city misdemeanor law against scaling tall buildings without permission in his March 16 escapade. About a week later,

three extreme-skydiving fans were arrested for a September leap off the tower.

Together, the episodes stirred officials' concern and prompted security changes at the trade center.

Casquejo sneaked through a construction-fence gap, past an inattentive security guard and up a ladder, scaffolding, elevators and stairs to the top of the unfinished 1 World Trade Center skyscraper around 4 a.m., authorities said. After spending about two hours atop the symbolic 1,776-foot (541-meter)-tall tower—the nation's tallest building—Casquejo encountered a security guard as he descended and was arrested.

Growing up in Weehawken, New Jersey, Casquejo developed a yen for scaling precarious structures and for parkour, an extreme sport that combines elements from martial arts, gymnastics and rock climbing, a friend has said.

The guard he eluded was subsequently fired, and the building's head of security re-



16-year-old Filipino-American Justin Casquejo

signed. Both worked for a private company protecting the building. The government

agency that owns the trade center, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, later hired a company that guards its airports to handle security at trade center entrances.

Port Authority and private security agents protect the inside of the 16-acre (6.5-hectare) World Trade Center site. The New York Police Department guards the perimeter, deploying more than 200 officers, surveillance cameras and other technology.

The skydivers and some-

one accused of helping them on the ground have pleaded not guilty to various charges.

Casquejo gave the court a 1,200-word essay explaining what he had learned from the episode, Menin said; the essay and the rest of the case file were sealed because he was declared a youthful offender. The offense will be wiped from his record.

"The court has every reason to believe" Casquejo will go on to a productive adulthood, Menin told him. "It will be up to you to prove the court right." (www.philstar.com)

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TOP 10 UNHEALTHY HABITS

MIND YOUR BODY by Willie T. Ong, MD

I've written several articles on how to live a healthy life. But this time, let me list down 10 unhealthy habits everyone should avoid. The numbers in parentheses refer to the approximate reductions in lifespan each bad habit entails.

1. Heavy alcoholic (minus three years). A little red wine is beneficial for your health. The benefit in red wine comes from the red grapes, which contain flavonoids and resveratrol. However, too much alcohol can lead to diseases such as liver cirrhosis, liver cancer, stomach ulcers, oral cancer, brain damage, dementia, abusive behavior, and vehicular accidents. To be on the safe side, men are allowed to drink two glasses of wine a day while women can take one glass of wine a day. Doctors also don't encourage non-alcoholic drinkers to start drinking.

2. Eating unhealthy foods (minus four years). Here's the triple threat to your health:

Fats, sugar, and salt. These three ingredients are linked to heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure, respectively. Avoid unhealthy fats in the form of saturated fats and trans-fatty acids. Saturated fats are found in butter, creams, and pork and beef fat. Trans fats can be found in margarines and certain cooking oils. Check the nutritional label. There are also hidden sugars in sweetened beverages and juices. Don't drink too much. Conversely, eat more healthy vegetables and fruits like bananas, carrots, tomatoes, and citrus fruits.

3. No doctor's checkup (minus four years). Even if you feel well, your doctor can still guide you on what checkups you need (laboratory tests, vaccines, and cancer-screening tests). Some diseases are so-called silent killers. You don't feel anything until it's too late. So, if you are 40 years old and above, or if you have a family history of heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure, get a yearly checkup. Studies show that people who get reg-



ular checkups live longer than those who don't.

4. Engaging in extreme sports (minus four years). Life has its risks. So why add to your risks further by engaging in dangerous sports like car racing, thrill rides, professional boxing, and wrestling? A survey at Monash University in Australia shows that horse riding, power boating, and motorsports cause the highest injuries. In the US, American football players frequently sustain serious injuries and have a shorter lifespan. Other risk activities are flying planes, mountain climbing, hang gliding, and parachuting.

5. Yoyo diet and fad diet (minus five years). Do everything in moderation. A yoyo

diet is a kind of diet fad wherein a person gains weight, then goes on a diet for a few weeks, and then binges again. Some people skip breakfast and then take on a huge meal later. Others rotate from a high-protein diet to various diet fads or diet pills, all of which are potentially harmful to the body. Try to lose or gain weight by just one to two pounds a week.

6. Thinking old (minus five years). The body will follow what the mind tells it to. Therefore, feel young and think positive. Norman Vincent Peale, main proponent of positive thinking, recalled a time when his concept was scoffed at in the 1950s. Decades later, positive thinking gained more scientific evidence and adherents. Hence, see your glass as half-full. Believe you'll beat your disease and you can. To learn more about positive thinking, I urge our readers to read any of Peale's enlightening books.

7. Lack of exercise (minus seven years). Studies show that even mild exercise has some health benefits. Moderate exercise has been proven to prevent diabetes and maintain body weight. Exercise a minimum of three times a week to maintain your ideal weight and muscle tone. If you plan to enroll in a gym, get a doctor's clearance first. As you grow older, try to avoid high-impact exercises like basketball and badminton. Swimming, brisk walking, and taichi are excellent exercises. Lack of exercise may also lead to obesity, which in turn is associated with arthritis, heart disease, and diabetes.

8. Unsafe sex (minus eight years). Having multiple sexual partners carries atten-

dant risks for sexually transmitted diseases. While gonorrhea and herpes can be cured, there is still no vaccine or cure for HIV-AIDS. In fact, the number of infected persons in the Philippines is growing. It is sad to note that despite medical advances, many patients with AIDS still die. The Department of Health has come up with these tips for AIDS prevention: (A) Abstinence from sex, (B) Be faithful to your partner. Have a monogamous relationship, and (C) Careful in sex. Use protection if needed.

9. Smoking (minus eight years). A common reasoning among smokers is this: "If you smoke, you die. If you don't smoke, you die also." Yes, what they are saying is partially true. However, the fact remains that, on the average, smokers die eight years younger compared to non-smokers. There are over 70,000 scientific articles to prove that smoking damages your heart, lungs, esophagus, stomach, bowels, prostate, and predisposes you to all kinds of cancer. In fact, smoking-related illnesses are the top causes of mortality. If you want to live longer, quit smoking.

10. Not taking your medicines (minus 10 years). Studies show that when a patient with high blood pressure takes his medicines, he may live 10 to 15 years longer as compared to someone who does not take his medicines. For diabetes patients, studies show that reducing the blood sugar to normal levels has enormous health benefits. Other helpful drugs include aspirin and statins when given for the right kind of patients. For those over 40, consult your doctor if you need to take any maintenance medicines.

Now, I hope you will remember to avoid these 10 bad habits. If you want to live longer, simply reverse the above list and do the opposite. For example, instead of not taking your medicines, start taking them. Good luck! (www.philstar.com)

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FILIPINO WOMEN'S CIVIC CLUB OF HAWAII, MISS MARIA CLARA AND MR. BARONG CONTESTS • **SUNDAY** • September 13, 2014 • Prince Hotel | 6:00 PM • For details, contact Bernadette Fajardo at 342-8090

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GLOBAL NEWS

DFA Chief Meets with Pope Francis

MANILA, Philippines - Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario has met with Pope Francis as part of preparations for the papal visit to the Philippines in January next year.



Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario is welcomed by Pope Francis during a visit to the Vatican last Sept. 3. Del Rosario met with the Vatican foreign minister, Archbishop Dominique Memberti, as part of preparations for the papal visit to the Philippines next year.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Del Rosario was in the Vatican from Sept. 1 to 3.

He discussed details for the pope's visit with the Vatican Foreign Minister, Archbishop Dominique Memberti.

The DFA said the meeting was also initiated to further enhance relations between the Catholic Church and the Philippine government.

Pope Francis will visit the country from Jan. 15 to 19 after his visit to Sri Lanka.

He is expected to meet with Typhoon Yolanda survivors and victims of the magnitude-7.2 earthquake that devastated Bohol.

Tagbilaran Bishop Leonardo Medroso said the pope would share a meal with the typhoon victims when he visits Palo, Leyte.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Church-run Radio Veritas has started

distributing life-size standees of Pope Francis in parishes and schools as part of the promotional campaign for his visit next year.

Fr. Anton Pascual, president of Radio Veritas, said the distribution started last week in various churches in Metro Manila.

In Manila, the standees were put up at the Arzobispado de Manila in Intramuros, Caritas Manila in Pandacan and Sto. Nino Parish in Tondo.

Standees of Pope Francis were

also distributed at the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Diliman and Christ the King Church along E. Rodriguez in Quezon City.

In Makati City, the standees were displayed at the national shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park and Greenbelt chapel.

The standees were put up at SM Megamall, dioceses of Antipolo and Pasig and Assumption in Antipolo.

"We are planning to print more so we can distribute it to as many churches, organizations and selected schools," the priest said.

Pascual said the standees are expected to attract the faithful, especially those who want to take their "selfie" with the pontiff.

The Mary and the Popes exhibit at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City, which runs until Sept. 28, is also part of the papal awareness campaign of Radio Veritas.

"We want to promote his advocacies and make people get to know him more through his biography, quotes, pictures, especially since Radio Veritas will be the official papal

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radio. Everything you want to know about the pope you'll hear it there," Pascual said. (www.philstar.com)

Pinoy Ref Makes FIBA World Cup KO Stage

MADRID - Gilas Pilipinas is out but the Philippines still has a representation left in the 2014 FIBA World Cup in the person of Ferdinand "Bong" Pascual who made the cut for the list of referees officiating the meet's knockout games in this city and over in Barcelona.



Barcelona, joining referees from the US, Argentina, Latvia, Serbia, Brazil, France, Greece, Spain and Angola.

To work on games in Madrid are refs from the US, Mexico, Ukraine, Italy, Croatia, Canada, Puerto Rico, Slovenia, Germany and Australia.

Pascual is the first Filipino ref to work on the men's world basketball championship for the first time in a long, long while, one of four from Asia that made the 38-man officiating roster for the

Spanish world meet.

The other Asian refs, Yuji Hirahara of Japan, Mohammad Al Amiri of Kuwait and Yevgeniy Mikheyev of Kazakhstan, failed to make the list for the knockout stage.

The 34 other refs come from 24 countries across FIBA's four other continental zones - America, Europe, Africa and Oceania.

The group consists of tested refs with ages ranging from 27 to 50 and an average refereeing experience of 11.6 years.

Pascual, 44, a former University of Baguio Cardinal from Cabanatuan City, has been an international referee for 11 years now. (www.philstar.com)

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