

HAWAII

FILIPINO CHRONICLE

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◆ APRIL 2, 2016 ◆

BEST OF PINOY CINEMA ON DISPLAY AT FILM FESTIVAL

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EDITORIALS

Pinoy Cinema on Display at Filipino Film Fest

Everyone loves a good movie, whether it is science fiction, an action-packed thriller or romantic comedy. Simply kill the lights, snuggle up next to your favorite person or persons, grab a bag of popcorn and blissfully enjoy the next few hours.

For those movie goers who prefer a night out, attending a local film festival is a good venue to see a range of different movies with a certain theme. One such event, the 8th Annual Filipino Film Festival, is being shown throughout the month of April at the Honolulu Museum of Art. The Festival offers the 10 latest and best movie offerings from the Philippines and two films from Southeast Asia—Thailand and Cambodia. The Festival is already among the Museum's fastest growing cinematic events due to the diverse range and themes of films that engage audiences. The line-up includes award winning films that have achieved wide acclaim on the international festival circuit. For non-Tagalog speaking members of the audience, English subtitles will help them to follow the storylines.

The Filipino Film Festival is a big deal because it brings Filipino cinema before a mainstream audience and fosters an atmosphere of cultural pride. Ultimately, attendees leave the event with a better understanding of Philippine history, way of life, traditional beliefs and other uniquely Filipino customs. For example, in honor of the film "Bonifacio: Ang Unang Pangulo" which airs on opening night, organizers have planned a special reception themed in ode to the 1898 inauguration of the First Republic of the Philippines. There will also be live *eskrima* demonstrations to reenact the martial arts used during the revolution, as well as cultural dances.

So don't miss the 8th Annual Filipino Film Festival, especially if you love Filipino movies. Besides enjoying a good movie or two, there will be opportunities to network with fellow cinematic buffs or even learn something new about the Philippines or Filipino culture. *See you at the Film Festival!*

Trump is Not to Blame; He is Simply Capitalizing on Today's Political Reality

Donald Trump is all the things written about him – a bigot, sexist, xenophobe and megalomaniac. But truth be told, being any of the above really hasn't stopped some candidates with similar views from winning political races in the past. The only difference this time around is that Trump holds nothing back. His blunt and brash swagger makes him a bigger target than many politicians thinking the exact same things.

Fast forward to the General Election and this is where the bandwagon of hate ends, not because of who or what Trump is and says, but because the GOP simply cannot win a national presidential election against the current Democrat coalition.

The GOP wasn't about to win a presidential race anyway...

Trump already knew what keen political observers noticed as political fact: the Obama coalition of 8 years ago saw the birth and coming of age of a new establishment that today remains the biggest national block of voters: women, Blacks, Hispanics, Gays, immigrants, young college graduates and educated White liberals.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Are you living on the financial edge? According to a recent poll conducted by the Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, nearly half of Hawaii residents are living paycheck to paycheck. What is alarming is that when broken down by ethnicity, the poll shows that Filipinos comprise a whopping 78 percent of those who live month to month! It just shows how financially precarious it is to live in Hawaii, especially when large unexpected expenses hit.



On a more positive note, Kauai residents are celebrating the groundbreaking of their long awaited Kauai Philippine Cultural Center (see page 11). In our January 23, 2016 issue, the Chronicle ran a cover story about the proposed center and efforts by the Kauai Filipino Chamber of Commerce, residents, businesses and other stakeholders to launch the project. Now the real work begins—mainly fundraising to pay for the entire project. We encourage you to consider making a tax deductible donation to the KPCC. Every bit helps!

In related news, the Chronicle congratulates Bobby Ayonon who was recently installed as the 16th president of the Kauai Filipino Chamber of Commerce. Ayonon, who has successfully owned and operated Kauai Air Conditioning for the past 35 years, shares in an exclusive interview with the Chronicle his business experience and vision for leading the organization forward and into the future. Find out more about Ayonon on page 15.

Our cover story for this issue focuses on the 8th Annual Filipino Film Festival which is going on now at the Honolulu Museum of Art. The Festival boasts 10 Philippine produced and directed films, plus two other films from Southeast Asia. The event will be entertaining, have a family friendly environment and offer an overall positive appeal for a sophisticated, well-educated audience. Many of the films have redemptive, uplifting endings with complex, compelling narratives that equal some of the best international films being made today. Please turn to page 4 for movie listings, dates and times.

In closing, please take some time to read the other informative articles in this issue, particularly our Tax Time column on page 16. If you have story ideas, suggestions or concerns to share, please feel free to email us at: filipinochronicle@gmail.com.

Until our next issue...aloha and mabuhay!

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

GOP candidates can still win regional races and will continue to do so, even a majority at times as we've seen in the last midterm elections. But recapturing a national presidential race will be near impossible for the GOP unless the Democrat coalition suddenly unravels.

So when Trump offends women, Blacks, Hispanics, Gays, immigrants, young college graduates and educated White liberals, he really doesn't care as much either way because it has always been his political strategy. Face it: this coalition of Americans wasn't about to vote Republican anyway.

But Trump believes he has the numbers on his side to win, that enough White males, Christians, right-wing ideologues, upper-class Americans, Wall Street and wannabe Wall-streeters can propel him to victory. It's a gamble that he was willing to take in the very beginning of his campaign – to run a rancorous divisive campaign like no other seen in modern American history, built on the premise of hate, divide and conquer.

Where he fails, and will fail miserably, is among moderates. But a shrewd thinker he has already proven to be, he also already knows that moderates are a shrinking breed in American politics.

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OPINION

Remembering Jovito Salonga

By Belinda A. Aquino, Ph.D.

The recent passing of Filipino political icon, Jovito Salonga, is a devastating loss to Philippine society, politics and culture.

He was often referred to as the “greatest President the Philippines never had.” He should have been President!

Indeed Philippine destiny might have been significantly better with Salonga at the helm.

Since the current generation of Filipinos is too young to know who Salonga was, it is imperative that they at least get some substantial knowledge of his past and subsequent achievements and accomplishments.

He had a superior intellect and unquestionable integrity. He was the epitome of compassion and best of all, an unflappable temperament.

I knew him personally as the most remarkable human being I have ever met. He was always pleasant, slow to anger

and deliberate in his behavior. He had none of the corruption of the political system during his time and until now.

One of the things that I remember so well was listening to him in Encino, California, about his attempt to dissuade the late Ninoy Aquino from going back to the Philippines because the Marcos dictatorship was intent on eliminating him from causing troubles among his followers not only in the Philippines but also in the US and all over the world.

But the late Ninoy Aquino would not be deterred. He was confident that the worst that could happen to him was to go back to prison, which to him was tolerable having been detained previously for nearly a decade in the Philippines. But that was not to be.

It must be recalled that Salonga himself was one of the most critically wounded victims of the Plaza Miranda bombing, which Marcos had attributed to the “communists.” He was pronounced “clinically dead” and his survival was seen by most observers an act of God to live a



Jovito Salonga

longer and fuller life after that deadly bombing in 1971. He lived to the ripe old age of 95.

When he retired from exile to the US, Salonga formed the Philippine Commission on Good Governance (PCGG), tasked by the incoming Cory government to pursue the “ill-gotten wealth” of Marcos known to be between five to ten billion dollars. And probably even more.

After a year of serving as PCGG chair, Salonga decided to run for the Senate – a measure of his fundamental preference for good government and democratic rule. He obtained the highest number of votes, which was much more than what he garnered in the previous 1965 and 1971 elections.

Under his leadership, the PCGG recovered much of the “hidden wealth” stashed away in Swiss banks and other shell companies formed by the regime to receive much of the hidden wealth on a regular basis.

His compassion, humility and work ethic were incomparable. Because of his “due diligence” work and superior intellect, much of the hidden wealth was recovered, and until now much more has been unraveled and returned to the Philippine government to be used for the Comprehensive Land Reform Program (CARP) the Philippine Congress formed that body to continue the recovery of the “illegally amassed” wealth.

On a personal level, his presence before you was flattering and a real pleasure to meet him. He was the epitome of compassion and humility. You felt important and at ease with him as he talked about his life and career without any taint of arrogance and elitism. He always asked what you were doing, what’s going on with your life, and offering how he could assist you if you needed help in your personal undertakings.

While I was “stranded” in Hawaii, where I was overtaken by Martial Law in 1972 he designated me as one of the PCGG’s representatives in the US. I was assigned to Hawaii where much of the hidden

wealth was suspected to be kept when Marcos and his family and cronies were exiled with the help of the US. Hawaii was chosen as his place of exile because many Filipinos in Hawaii are predominantly Ilocano, some of them Marcos relatives and friends. No other state in the US would accept them in their ranks.

The Aquino government appointed Tomas Gomez III (“Buddy”) to monitor Marcos moves and maneuvers in Hawaii. Marcos started to destabilize the Aquino government using the Consulate to plot some of his maneuvers. But the ever militant Buddy Gomez was always watching him like a hawk, and even foiled an attempt by Marcos and his men to intercept their move. The details of this remarkable scenario are too complex to explain in this brief commentary.

There will be no other human being like Jovito Salonga. And his legacy of honor and pride will remain one of the highest points in our history as a nation.

(DR. AQUINO was appointed by Jovito Salonga as the PCGG representative for Hawaii until he resigned to run for the Senate.

She is currently Professor Emeritus at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she served as Professor of Political Science and Asian Studies, and Founding Director of the Center for Philippine Studies.)

EDITORIALS (from page 2, TRUMP....)

The Key Unknown

What Trump is banking on and what might end up being his only salvation to victory, at least mathematically, is that he wins over the no-show population come election time. As most know, the U.S. has one of the lowest voter turnout percentages in the world. This large, loose-knit group, representing a cross section of Americans, will be the X-factor of this 2016 presidential race. A big chunk of this group happen to be Trump’s least vocal but silent majority: white working class males disillusioned with the political establishment.

Voting trends in Republican primaries already are registering record-breaking levels that may bode well for Trump. But replicating that trend in the general election is tougher and works both ways. An example -- Hispanics are expected to come out in record numbers as

well due to Trump’s anti-immigrant and racist comments. Immigrants in general, who are known as the least politically active voting group, are also gearing up to vote like never before. Record-number of green card holders are signing up to become citizens first in fear of new anti-immigration laws and second to vote against Trump.

Credit to Trump

What Trump did manage to do at this point is nothing short of remarkable in that he already beat one major political party – the Republican Party. Trump is really an independent who possesses the worse attributes of the Republican Party, then infiltrated the GOP against all odds and gave that party a good old-fashioned shellacking, a big thumping of which the GOP will take years to recover.

Should Trump fail this

time around, it is unlikely his brand of ugly politics will just suddenly disappear, especially when considering the huge success he already has accomplished.

Also to Trump’s credit, he at least unveiled the shroud of bigotry that many supporters of the Republican Party always had but hid behind closed doors due to fears of being politically incorrect. It’s high time that the truth be laid out about how many in the GOP think, instead of hiding behind policy that looks and smells racist but can’t be labeled as such because after all policies are just policies.

We have Trump to thank for bringing all the fears and anger of the Republican Party to the forefront for all Americans to judge and vote on this coming general election. For better or worse, Trump has crystallized today’s political reality for Americans to accept, reject, or change.

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COVER STORY

Filipino Film Festival Promises to Delight Audiences

By Dennis Galolo



“A good movie can make you feel alive again... make you care, make you believe in possibilities again.”—Pauline Kael, film critic

If there's one thing that we can all agree on about cinematic films, it's that movies allow us to escape reality for brief periods. Whether it's an action thriller or romantic comedy, we empathize with the film's characters on screen and ride along their emotional roller coaster.

Generally speaking, good movies take us to places where we've never been to and inside the minds of people we've never imagined being or meeting. Movies offer us a window into the wider world, broaden our perspective and open our eyes to new wonders.

Filipinos are among the most avid moviegoers around. Because Filipinos come from a deep tradition of storytelling, cinema, not surprisingly, is embraced and much loved. Movies continue to be a very popular form of entertainment in the Philippines, generating billions of pesos each year in

revenues and employing about 260,000 Filipinos.

Manila is movie central for cinephiles and hosts dozens of domestic and international film festivals each year—from independent productions and documentaries from all over the world.

Local Film Festival

A film festival currently being held at the Honolulu Museum of Art from April 2-24, 2016 may be just what the doctor ordered for Filipino film fanatics in Hawaii who long for the latest movies enjoyed by family and friends back in the Philippines.

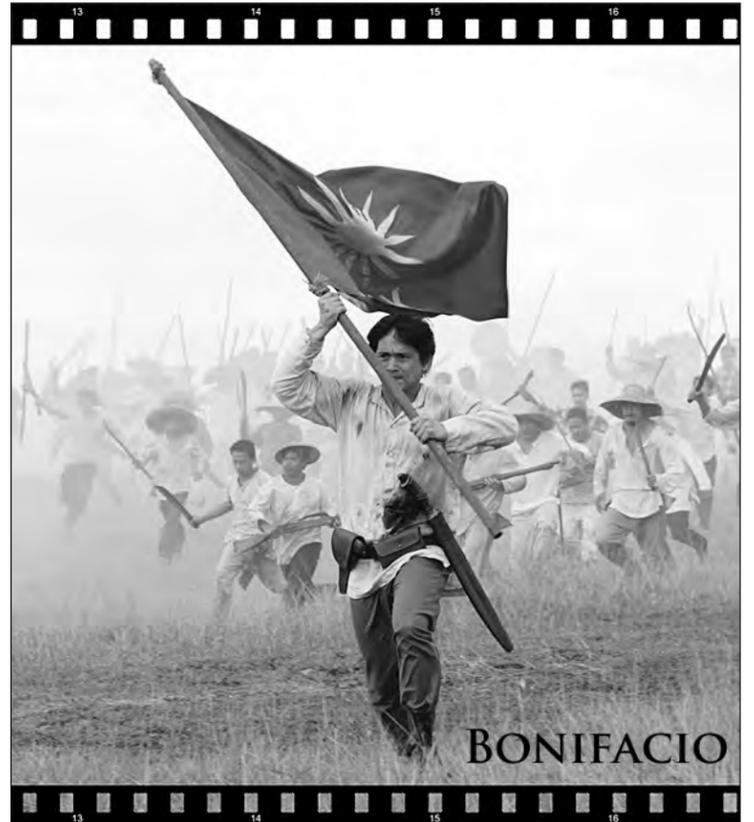
The Festival includes 10 Filipino films and two films from other Southeast Asian countries. All of the films have achieved wide acclaim on the international festival circuit and have a diverse range of stories and themes to provide audiences with a comprehen-

sive scope of Philippine cinema.

According to Honolulu Museum of Art theater director Taylour Chang, the Festival's line-up of Philippine-made and directed films is sure to engage Hawaii's theatre-going crowd.

“From art house films that push the boundaries of filmmaking aesthetics to commercial successes that comment on historical and contemporary issues, the quality and breadth of films being produced in the Philippines are at a peak and thriving,” Chang says. “There's a growing momentum of young, talented filmmakers banging out quality content, particularly in the Philippines, and we're excited to showcase it.

“Nowhere else in Hawaii will you find a program that dedicates an entire month to Filipino and Southeast Asian cinema. If you were to see



every film in this festival, you would get a full taste of a thriving visual culture that will possibly shape the future of cinema.”

Certain themes rise to the surface in this year's selections. There are visual examinations of cultural figureheads such as the revolutionary Andres Bonifacio, world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao and Philippine literary titan Nick Joaquin. There are also family-friendly films on Sundays, festival darlings that portray the beauty and power of the Philippine landscape, and romance narratives that com-

ment on contemporary love.

According to Festival organizing committee member Rickie Camara, the films were carefully chosen to achieve a balance between commercial and independent entries, as well as historical and modern perspectives. He says that the selected films will help audiences to get better acquainted with one's history and culture, and provide a sense of identity and perspective.

“Cultural identity is an important part of health,” says Camara, who along with Dr. May Ablan organized the first

(continued on page 5)

PARTICIPATING FILIPINO FILMS

BONIFACIO: ANG UNANG PANGULO (Bonifacio: the First President)

April 2, 3 and 10 at 7:30 pm

Directed by Enzo Williams, 100 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ Revolutionary Andrés Bonifacio was the founder and leader of the Katipunan, the late 1890s liberation movement. Told through the eyes of three Manila high school students on a museum tour, the objects in the museum become windows to Bonifacio's dramatic armed revolt against Spanish colonial rule. The interweaving of time periods illustrates how a historical figure can continue to inspire in the modern world.

KID KULAFU

April 5, 7 at 7:30 pm and April 15 at 1 pm and 7:30 pm

Directed by Paul Soriano, 109 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ Before he became one of the world's greatest boxers, Manny Pacquiao lived a hand-to-mouth existence. When Pacquiao discovers his natural talent for boxing, he embarks on a brutal and intense journey that takes him from the mountains of the Philippines to the streets of Manila. He must risk everything to become a champion—for himself, his family and his country.

(continued on page 5)



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COVER STORY

(from page 3, FILIPINO FILM FESTIVAL...)

Filipino Film Festival as part of an initiative of the Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii (PMAH).

“Too many times, young Filipinos will dismiss their heritage either because of not knowing their roots or because of ‘shame’ given the socio-economic roots of Filipinos in Hawaii. It is time we embrace our cultural identity and proudly share it with the community.”

An indirect goal of the organizing committee, Camara says, is to also familiarize the Filipino community with the Museum, which boasts a Filipiniana section which many Filipinos are unaware of and have yet to visit. He envisions visiting Filipino artists, cinematographers and directors sharing their work with the community at future Festivals and related events.

Fellow organizing committee member Rose Churma says that the line-up of films is very diverse, from the historical to popular romance comedies, so there will be a film for all types of tastes.

Philippine cinema continues to produce great talent both behind the scenes and in

front of the camera,” Churma says. “The films provide a glimpse of current Filipino cultural morés that folks like us in the diaspora may find interesting, even educational.”

Opening Night Gala

Churma expects “Bonifacio: Ang Unang Pangulo,” which will be shown on the Festival’s opening night, to be the biggest hit and favorite of audiences. “Bonifacio: Ang Unang Pangulo” was endorsed by several community groups for promotion.

“The film is historical, well-made and won several awards when it was first shown,” Churma says. “A recent film ‘Heneral Luna’ was a box office hit so there may be residual interest in the Bonifacio film as it provides context to the political situation in the Philippines today.”

Festival organizers have planned a special opening night reception themed in ode to the 1898 inauguration of the First Republic of the Philippines. In fact, Chang says that the inauguration party will be recreated to celebrate Philippine culture and the Philippine’s unique political



history—including the original menu served during the celebration over a century ago, courtesy of Max’s of Manila.

According to Chang, there will also be live *eskrima* demonstrations by Grand Master Roberto Garcia who will re-enact the martial arts used during the revolution. The Bulacan Circle & Associates of Hawaii will also perform several traditional Philippine dance numbers.

“In the film ‘Bonifacio,’ a museum plays a key role in bringing Andres Bonifacio’s story to life. Likewise, we aim to revitalize Bonifacio’s legacy at the Honolulu Museum of Art,” Chang says.

Helping Hands

The Filipino Film Festival has expanded beyond PMAH’s scope to include many outside Filipino organizations that are actively supporting and partnering with the Museum to encourage their members to attend.

Partners include the Philippine Celebrations Coordinating Committee of HI (PCCCH), the Filipino Community Center of Hawaii (Fil-Com), the Bulacan Circle & Associates of Hawaii, the Filipino Association of University Women (FAUW), the Oahu Filipino Community Council (OFCC), Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (FCCH), Philippine Medical Association of

Hawaii (PMAH), Hawaii Filipino Lawyer’s Association, Hawaii Women in Filmmaking, and the University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Hawaii (UPAAH).

The 2015 Filipino Film Festival with its six films was a break through event, attracting well over 1,000 attendees over 8 days. Organizers expect to top that amount this year.

Churma says attendees are typically folks with ties to the Philippines but as with most Honolulu Museum of Art events, the audience is mostly “mainstream.” She encourages the Filipino community to attend the Festival to see for themselves how well-made the featured films are.

“It is important for us to support this and other initiatives by the Honolulu Museum of Art, since their intent is to showcase the art and culture of the diverse populations of Hawaii. For those of us who value the perpetuation and preservation of our culture, arts and history, encouraging our friends and family to go to the movies is a fun way to celebrate our heritage,” she says.

See you at the Festival!

PARTICIPATING FILIPINO FILMS

(from page 4)

ABOVE THE CLOUDS

April 6 at 7:30 pm and April 8 at 1 pm and 7:30 pm

Directed by Pepe Diokno, 90 min, English and Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ After losing his parents in a flood, 15-year-old Andy is forced to live with his estranged grandfather. Disconsolate, he withdraws from everyone around him until his grandfather shows him old photographs of his parents during a hike. Together, they embark on an arduous trek, retracing his parents’ steps in a spirited effort to overcome grief. The film is a breathtaking journey that reveals the resilience of the human spirit.

FILEMON MAMON

April 3 at 4 pm, April 7 at 1 pm and April 10 at 4 pm

Directed by Will Fredo, 94 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ A family film for all ages, Filemon Mamon is based on a popular children’s book. Filemon is a high school student who desires two things: to win the heart of the girl he loves and to be the lead in a musical play about his hero Andrés Bonifacio—“the Father of the Philippine Revolution and Filipino Nation.” But his big problem is his weight. Filemon is raised by his grandmother who loves to cook and believes that “to be fat is to be healthy and to be healthy is to be fat.” Over the course of this endearing musical comedy about loving food and loving yourself, Filemon learns that his lola’s adage isn’t quite true.

(continued on page 8)



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Before You Reject the System, Understand It

By Lee H. Hamilton

Of there's a theme that sets this political season apart, it's the voters' utter disdain for most of the people who practice politics. They're fed up with politicians, they've lost faith and confidence in the political elite, and they don't believe that the realm where politicians ply their craft — government — works.

The two presidential contenders who have most channeled this frustration, Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, have electrified many voters who want to get this message across. They've mobilized new voters, people more mainstream politicians haven't reached. The involvement of more Americans in the political system, though it unsettles the old order, is bracing.

There are many legitimate reasons for these people to be turned off by the political system today. But I'd argue that if you're hell-bent on shaking up the system, you also need to understand it — and under-

stand that certain features are likely to persist no matter how hard you try to change them.

The first is that it is very hard to make our representative democracy work. We make progress incrementally, over years if not generations. The first president to press hard for affordable, accessible health care was Harry Truman. It's taken us that long even to get close — and no one would argue that the work is done.

So you have to approach politics with great patience. Our system discourages the rush to judgment — it puts a premium on including as many voices as possible, which takes time in a complicated country. The process is inevitably slow, noisy and messy, the results fully satisfy no one, and more often than not the best we can do is to muddle through.

Which is why in our system, there's rarely a sense of completion. The work — on health care, taxes, the environment, you name it — is never done. Nothing is ever finally settled. There is no ultimate solution.



Many people are also turned off by what lies at the center of our system: deal-making. This involves a clash of ideas in the public arena, compromise, and negotiation, which make a lot of Americans uneasy. Yet it's how we resolve our differences — and has been since the first day of the United States' existence.

So politicians who insist on purity impede solutions. There ought to be a healthy tension between idealism and realism, but we have to find a pragmatic way to combine them. We have to consider different points of view, the intense involvement of special interest groups, and in many cases the robust interest shown by ordinary citizens. This makes it challenging to come to an agreement on complicated issues, but it's neces-

sary to keep the country from coming apart.

Congress in recent years has reached new levels of polarization and failure to address the major issues of the day. In public meetings, I often encounter a yearning for leadership to solve all our problems, usually along the lines of, "Where are the Abe Lincolns of our day?" Sadly, it's a false hope. Our problems are made by us and have to be resolved by us. Abraham Lincoln's not around any more.

We cannot look to government to solve all our problems. Indeed, we live in an era in which government faces more and more problems it cannot effectively deal with. Increasingly, citizens have to step forward and fill the void that government leaves. The relevance of

the citizen increases every day as power is more diffuse, technology empowers individuals, and social media allows more citizens to express their views, vent their frustrations, and to mobilize organizations.

We may well be moving into the century of the citizen. I think of the woman who got rail-crossing signals fitted out at dangerous intersections in Indiana, after her daughter was killed at a rail crossing with no signals. Or of my neighbor, who helped build a movement to press for accurate labeling of food ingredients, because he was diabetic and had no way to know the sugar content of goods. Our communities and lives are better because of citizen action. Indeed, unless citizens boost their involvement and contributions, many of our problems will not be solved.

LEE HAMILTON is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar, IU School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice, IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Sabado to Discuss Renowned Filipino Artists

by Christine Sabado

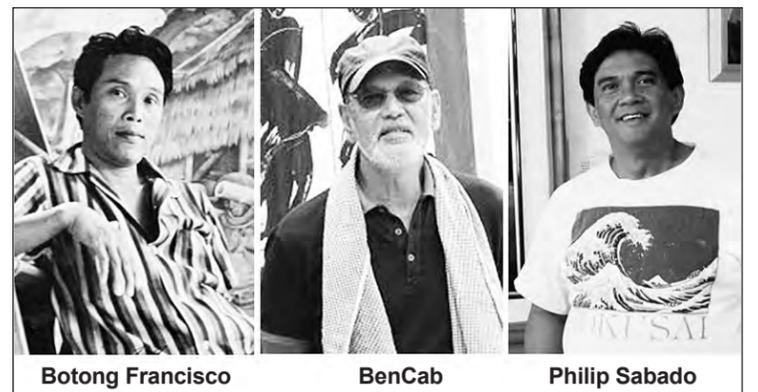
Mau artist Phil Sabado will host "Three Strokes of Brilliance!"—an event that will explore the world of three internationally-acclaimed artists through dialogue and

amazing films detailing their lives and art.

The artists include Carlos "Botong" Francisco from the Philippines. Francisco is an art historian, muralist and National Artist who became an international force for political

awareness and historical documentation of Philippine history through his murals in the 1920s.

A second artist is Benedicto Cabrera, more commonly known as "Ben Cab," who is also a National Artist of



Botong Francisco

BenCab

Philip Sabado

the Philippines and more popularly known as a master of contemporary Philippine art. He has a museum in Baguio City showcasing his state of the art masterpieces and other projects.

Sabado, who himself is an accomplished artist, will put into perspective these great artists and their influence on his life and work. Sabado will also share his own unique perspective on his Hawaiian art-

work, exploration of Hawaiian history, Filipino heritage, life on Molokai, as well as Hawaiian and Philippine mythology.

The Maui Filipino Chamber of Commerce is co-sponsoring "Three Strokes of Brilliance!" which is scheduled for May 6, 2016 from 9 am to 12 noon. For more details, contact the Sabado Art Studio at 242-6762 or via email at: sabadostudioart@gmail.com.

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WHAT'S UP ATTORNEY?



By Atty. Emmanuel
Samonte Tipon

Part II

Poe Decision: Is It Unconstitutional?

In the main dissenting opinion by Justice Antonio T. Carpio, he said that the Philippines adheres to the jus sanguinis principle of the “law of the blood” to determine citizenship at birth, which means that an individual acquires Filipino citizenship at birth solely by virtue of biological descent from a Filipino father or mother; the framers of the Constitution rejected the proposal to include foundlings as citizens of the Philippines; foundlings whose parents are unknown cannot be considered Filipino citizens; each independent nation has the right to determine who are its citizens; there is no customary international law presuming a foundling as a citizen of the country where the foundling is found; the Philippines is not a signatory to the Hague Convention on foundlings; the only way a foundling can be considered a Filipino citizen is for the foundling to be naturalized; there is no law conferring natural-born citizenship on a foundling based alone on statistical probability; the position of the Solicitor General that a foundling with blond hair, blue eyes, white Caucasian skin, no Asian genes, is a natural born Filipino citizen is the height of absurdity and amends the Constitution and makes jus soli the governing principle for foundlings, contrary to the jus sanguinis principle in the constitution; it is incumbent on the person who claims Philippine citizenship to prove to the satisfaction of the court that he is really a Filipino, and no presumption can be indulged in favor of the claimant of Philippine citizenship.

Justice Mariano del Castillo noted in his dissenting opinion that it is not improbable that Poe was born to Filipino parents and that she should continue to obtain deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) evidence to prove her genealogy. Even if the court rules on her citizenship now, that ruling can be changed at any time when there is certainty about



her biological lineage because generally there is no res judicata on citizenship issues.

Residence

The majority opinion said that Poe’s claim that she will have been a resident for ten years and eleven months on the day before May 9, 2016 election is true, citing her U.S. passport showing her arrival in the Philippines on May 24, 2005; school records of her children showing enrollment in the Philippines since June 2005; title to a condominium issued in February 2006; a March 2006 e-mail to U.S. Postal Service confirming a change of address; the sale of U.S. home on April 27, 2006.

With respect to Poe’s declaration in her COC for President that she will be a Philippine resident for ten years and eleven months by May 9, 2016, which the Comelec said was contrary to her declaration in her COC for Senator which put six years and six months as her residence before May 13, 2013, which would mean that she started being a Philippine resident only in November 2006, the Supreme Court justified it saying Poe misunderstood the date required in her senatorial COC as the period of residence as of the day she submitted the COC in 2012. The Supreme Court said that Poe’s senatorial COC was not conclusive as to the period of residence and that Poe physically returned to the Philippines on May 24, 2005. The court concluded that to constitute material misrepresentation the misrepresentation must not

only refer to material facts but there must be a deliberate intent to mislead.

The dissenting opinion by Justice Mariano del Castillo said that Poe made contrasting declarations as to her period of residence in the Philippines in her senatorial COC and presidential COC which rendered her vulnerable to the charge that she committed material misrepresentation in her COC for president. For Justice del Castillo’s dissenting opinion, see http://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/pdf/web/viewer.html?file=/jurisprudence/2016/march2016/221697_delcastillo.pdf

Justice del Castillo pointed out that from May 24, 2005 (when Poe entered the Philippines as a visa-free balikbayan for one year) to July 18, 2006 (when the Bureau of Immigration approved Poe’s

petition to reacquire Philippine citizenship), Poe was an alien on temporary sojourn in the Philippines. Obtaining a Tax Identification Number is not conclusive proof of intent to remain in the Philippines, but merely indicates an intention to pay taxes. Buying a condominium or buying land do not evince an intent to remain in the Philippines for good. Poe also acquired a house in the U.S. in 2008, and still maintained the one she bought in 1992. Poe’s intention to mislead in her COC for president is shown by making it appear that she met the 10-year residency requirement when in fact, she did not.

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 specializes in immigration law and criminal defense. Office: American Savings Bank Tower, 1001 Bishop Street, Suite 2305, Honolulu, HI 96813. Tel. 808 225 2645 E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Websites: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com. He is from Laoag City and Magsingal, Ilocos 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. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice.

Ultimate Issues
Whether Mary Grace Natividad S. Poe-Llamanzares (“Poe”) made a material misrepresentation in her Certificate of Candidacy (COC) for President hinges on whether (1) she is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, and (2) she is a resident of the Philippines for ten years immediately preceding the May 9, 2016 election.

Citizenship

The majority opinion accuses the Comelec of bordering on “bigotry” when it ruled that since foundlings are not mentioned in the enumeration of citizens under the 1935 Constitution, they cannot be citizens. The majority said that the burden of proof was on the complaining petitioners to show that Poe was not natural born; there is a presumption that Poe has Filipino parents and is therefore a natural born citizen; the statistical probability that a child born from 1965 to 1975 in the Philippines is a natural-born Filipino is 99.83%; Poe has typical Filipino features; there is more than a 99% chance that a child born in the province would be a Filipino; while the 1935 Constitution is silent on foundlings, there is no restrictive language either that would exclude foundlings; under international law foundlings are citizens of the country of birth and that international law forms part of the law of the land. The majority opinion said that when a Filipino reacquires citizenship under RA 9225, the repatriation results in the recovery of the original nationality, and that since Poe was a natural-born citizen, she reacquired such status when she repatriated under RA 9225.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



By Senator Will Espero

Domestic Violence – A Silent Epidemic

cases of domestic violence quietly exist in our community for fear of shame or retaliation.

Statistics show that 1 in 4 women will experience some form of domestic violence in their lifetime. It can happen when one is dating, in a serious heterosexual or homosexual relationship, or in a marriage. Domestic violence is about controlling a person and having power over his or her daily life. Name calling, put downs, disrespect, aggressive behavior, yelling, shoving, hitting, slapping, threatening words and actions, choking, controlling who one sees or when one can go out, sexual abuse and saying ‘you’re a bad parent’ are forms of domestic violence. Domestic violence can also occur between non-married intimate

partners, relatives, older children, parents and siblings.

In 2014, Sgt. Darren Cachola of the Honolulu Police Department was caught on video fighting with his girlfriend. The video was met with outrage by the community, especially Hawaii’s domestic violence advocates. No charges were brought against Cachola and ultimately the police department responded by recommending Cachola be fired. Following this incident, the Legislature held a public hearing regarding domestic violence which I co-chaired with State Rep. Henry Aquino.

The testimony gathered at the hearing served as a catalyst for a number of legislative proposals in 2015 and this year. This year, I co-introduced two bills proposed by

the Women’s Legislative Caucus. Senate Bill 2318 SD2 HD1 would be known as the Address Confidentiality Program Act if passed. This law would help domestic violence victims trying to escape from their assailants by setting up a new mailing address that would be used in place of their physical address, which adds another layer of protection. Additionally, Senate Bill 2321 SD2 HD1 was introduced to ensure that government workers who may have to deal with people suffering from domestic violence be properly trained in intervention. From social workers to law enforcement personnel, front-line workers need to have the resources and “know-how” to properly intervene in a situation where domestic violence

is happening.

While I am pleased that these two bills are moving forward in the legislature, I feel that we still need and can do more. Ending domestic violence will continue to be one of my highest priorities. The Filipino community is known for its strong, loving families and support of its friends and neighbors. However, we are not immune and must stand vigilant and ready to help those who are suffering needlessly. If you or anyone you know is a victim of domestic violence, please call the Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence at 1-808-832-9316 or the Domestic Violence Action Center at 1-808-531-3771.

SEN. ESPERO is vice-president of the Hawaii State Senate.

Our community faces a serious epidemic that affects every social-economic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion and nationality without prejudice. Domestic violence is a continued threat to the health and well-being of our families, friends and neighbors. Whether it is physical injury, death or severe psychological trauma, the effects of domestic violence can destroy lives forever. Unlike a viral epidemic that is measurable and documented, most



PARTICIPATING FILIPINO FILMS

(from page 5)

DAHLING NICK

April 9 at 6:30 pm

Directed by Sari Raissa Lluch Dalena, 180 min.

■ This docudrama explores the life of National Artist for Literature recipient Nick Joaquin, who accepted the National Artist Award on the condition that the Marcos administration release a well-known writer who was unjustly detained during martial law. The film pays homage to one of Philippine literature’s greatest figures and weaves surreal re-enactments of Joaquin’s masterpieces with candid interviews from National Artists for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera, F. Sionil Jose, Charo Joaquin Villegas, Elena Roco and Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria Sison.

A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS FILIPINO

April 9 at 4 pm and April 12 at 1 pm and 7:30 pm

Directed by Lamberto V. Avellana, 90 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ Based on the celebrated play by Nick Joaquin, Lamberto Avellana’s absorbing drama is a commentary on the degeneration of Manila’s former arts district, reflecting the struggle between the old Filipino identity and the onslaught of western influence. Sisters Candida and Paula have taken it upon themselves to care for their father Don, a renowned painter. Dependent on financial support from their

brother and sister, Candida and Paula are steadfast in their ways, refusing to sell or leave their family home amidst the decline of their surroundings. To make ends meet, they rent a room to the modern, westernized Tony Javier. Paula elopes with Tony, setting off a series of events that results in the emancipation of not just the sisters, but the entire family.

PATINTERO: ANG ALAMAT NI MENG PAT-ALO

April 3, 5 and 10 at 1 pm

Directed by Mihk Vergara, 90 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ A young neighborhood patalo (underdog) named Meng assembles an unlikely team of losers to join her in the ultimate battle for the streets—patintero. Action packed, hilarious and heartwarming, the film reminds us that a good game with friends is more important than just winning.

ANG KUBO SA KAWAYANAN (THE HOUSE BY THE BAMBOO GROVE)

April 6, 9 and 16 at 1 pm

Directed by Alvin Yapan, 83 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ Michelle, a talented calado embroiderer, lives in her own world in a house by a bamboo grove. The film tells the story of how Michelle’s beloved home, along with the things around her—a river stone, a June beetle and a can of sardines—helps her to preserve the

ecology of joy and peace she nurtures. Meanwhile, everyone is trying to convince Michelle to abandon the house. The film is a meditation on the virtue of staying during a time of migration and of permanence in a land of cultural erosion.

SLEEPLESS

April 13 at 1 pm, April 14 at 7:30 pm and April 16 at 4 pm

Directed by Prime Cruz, 120 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ In this offbeat romantic comedy, stressed out, insomniac call-center agents Gem and Barry develop an undefined relationship, quite possibly a romance under the guise of friendship over several sleepless nights. Drawn together by their nocturnal loneliness, they talk about love, zombies and everything in-between.

ALL YOU NEED IS PAG-IBIG

April 13 at 7:30 pm, April 14 at 1 pm and April 16 at 7:30 pm

Directed by Antoinette Jadadone, 116 min, Tagalog with English subtitles.

■ A heart-warming family movie with a touch of romance, the film explores the complexity of human relationships in all their forms. The movie features varied forms of love—family love, sibling love, puppy love, unrequited love, ruined love, prospering love, in denial love, jaded love and true love. After all, what the world needs is love, sweet love.

LEGAL NOTES



By Emil Guillermo

An American President in Cuba Keeps Terror in Perspective

O remember being in the Brussels Airport more 40 years ago when the world seemed a whole lot safer. Certainly, safer than it seems today.

But you know what they say. When terrorists disrupt your lives, they win. Or as President Obama might say, “Enjoy the baseball game!”

The president was in Cuba this week and I just couldn’t help but feel the Filipino part of the story. Yes, even as an American Filipino, it’s hard not to be engaged by the historical news happening in Cuba.

People are getting choked up over seeing the first American president in Cuba since Calvin Coolidge in 1928. Even me. And you’ll hear that fact over and over about the trip, “For the first time in 88 years...” It’s true, we are watching history evolve.

If we look at U.S.-Cuban history, it started from a very bad place, marred by a sense of arrogance and paternalism, even before the Spanish American War. As a result of the U.S. victory in that war, the Treaty of Paris forced Spain to give up Cuba, Puerto Rico and Guam to the U.S. in 1898.

To sweeten the deal, the U.S. got the Philippines too. But it cost our country an additional \$20 million. It’s a little more than the \$24 the Dutch paid for Manhattan. But the Philippines is a 7,200 island archipelago, after all.

For that price, the U.S. got my father too. Filipinos in the Philippines weren’t “Americans” nor were they citizens. They were officially called “nationals,” a nice word for “colonized.” And when Coolidge was heading to Cuba in 1928, my dad was coming in by boat from Manila to San Francisco. My father was on

the Dollar Steamship Company’s President Pierce, named for the 14th president of the U.S. and perhaps the worst president who ever lived.

Pierce was a Democrat from New Hampshire and a moral compromiser. He was a pro-slavery, anti-abolitionist friend to the South. Pierce would hardly be considered a “good” Democrat today. An expansionist who believed in manifest destiny, he cut his teeth fighting the Mexicans in the Mexican-American War.

So let’s see, he was worse than Trump and his wall. Pierce fought and killed Mexicans and he was pro-slavery. That made his road to the presidency similar to Trump’s as well. Pierce faced a brokered convention in 1852, when after 48 ballots, he finally secured the nomination with a boost from Southerners.

But what makes Pierce relevant this week is his foreign policy stand. His best “less than shining moment” was the Ostend Manifesto—his attempt to buy Cuba from Spain, with the intent of annexing it into a slave state.

The South needed a place to expand slavery, so why not Cuba?

As you can see, before Fidel Castro, even before Calvin Coolidge, if we want to figure out how our attitudes toward Cuba were developed, we must not forget the deeds of our 14th president 162 years ago. That’s what they really mean when they say there’s lots of history to overcome.

Given all that, I thought it was amazing to see the two presidents, Obama and Castro, engage in their news conference, in what I call the “Barack and Raul show,” a formal and yet informal pas de deux. Pointed at the front end, but slightly more playful towards the Q&A. But due to all the history, it’s still a careful dance.

In his opening remarks,

Castro had his moments.

“Much more can be done if the U.S. blockade could be lifted,” Castro said through a translator. “We recognize the position of President Obama and his administration against the blockade and his repeated appeals to Congress to have it removed. The most recent measures adopted by his administration are positive, but insufficient.”

Castro complained that the blockade contains “discouraging elements and intimidating effects and extraterritorial outreach.” He was referring to the land currently occupied by Guantanamo Naval base, saying it would be “necessary to return” that territory to Cuba.

The question of human rights is the other huge issue that stands between the U.S. and Cuba. Again, Castro did not back down.

“There are profound differences between our countries that will not go away,” Castro said, who outlined them as the political systems, democracy, the exercise of human rights, social justice, international relations, world peace and stability.

“We defend rights,” Castro continued, and threw it back at the U.S. “In our view, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are indivisible, interdependent and universal. Actually, we find it inconceivable that a government does not defend and insure the right to health care, education, social security, food provision and development, equal pay and the rights of children. We oppose political manipulation and double standards in the approach to human rights.”

But then Castro borrowed from old Cold War speak to say, “We should learn the art of coexisting with our differences in a civilized manner” and to “focus on the things that bring us closer than those that pull us apart.”

When it was Obama’s turn to speak, he graciously ac-

knowledged, “We have a half-century of work to catch up on” and that the relationship “will not be transformed overnight.”

Knowing the history that dates back more than 160 years, this will be a much slower dance in Cuba than anyone thought. More fireworks came during the Q&A, when CNN reporter Jim Acosta asked a general question about the release of Cuban political prisoners.

“Give me a list of political prisoners and I will release them immediately,” Mr. Castro shot back. “If we have them, they will be released before tonight ends.”

President Obama brought the conversation back to what opening relations with Cuba is all about—commerce.

He said opening up dialogue to build new Cuban-U.S. constituencies could push Congress to end the embargo. He mentioned the opening up of joint entrepreneurial ventures on the internet or in agriculture.

But it always comes down to human rights. Of course, this hasn’t stopped imports from big human rights violators in Asia—namely, China.

China, the big communist/capitalist contradiction, part-friend, part-owner of U.S. paper, part enemy, was the elephant not in the room. And Obama mentioned it.

“Keep in mind, I’ve got fierce disagreements about the Chinese on human rights,” Obama said. Oh, but so did

others back to Bush One. Remember the phrase “Butchers of Beijing?” Again, history.

“I’ll be going to Vietnam later this year,” Obama continued. “I have deep disagreements with them as well. When we first visited Burma, people questioned if we should be traveling there because of long-standing human rights violations in our view. The approach that I have taken has been if I engage frankly, clearly, stating what our beliefs are, but also being clear we can’t force change on any particular country. Ultimately, it has to come from within. That is going to be a more useful strategy than the same kind of rigid disengagement that for 50 years did nothing.

“I have faith in people,” Obama said optimistically. “If you meet Cubans here and Cubans meet Americans and they’re talking, interacting, doing business together, going to school together and learning from each other, then they’ll recognize that people are people, and in that context, I believe that change will occur.”

It may not happen during his tenure but it’s a far cry from the sentiments of Pierce, who just wanted to buy Cuba outright. And probably for a lot cheaper than what the U.S. ultimately paid for the Philippines.

But that’s the past. And this is now. In this day, Cuba is hardly an enemy of the U.S. or the world.

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EMIL GUILLERMO is an award-winning journalist and commentator who writes from Northern California. He recently won the 2015 Dr. Suzanne Ahn Award for Civil Rights and Social Justice from the Asian American Journalists Association, California.

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PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

THE REWARD OF PERSEVERANCE

By Seneca Moraleda-Puguan

Three big NO's. Before my husband got his most awaited 'yes' to be my boyfriend, he endured three big NO's. Courting me was no breeze for him because I didn't like him. He went to my hometown and visited me in Singapore but to no avail, he received the same answer each time—a resounding NO.

But what changed my mind and heart? He made me feel valued and loved, worthy to be pursued. It seemed like I'm the only woman in the world. But what ultimately caused me to open my heart for him was his persistent pursuit of me. It said so much about his character. He just wouldn't give up.

So when he recently graduated with an Outstanding Student award, I was confident and had no doubt that he was deserving of it.

Five years of Masters and PhD in Energy Science in Myongji University, South Korea required hard work, patience

and perseverance. He had to do a lot of experiments, read countless journals and publish journals himself. He endured sleepless nights, sacrificed weekends and holidays and experienced rejections along the way. He invested sweat and tears into his studies. And they all paid off.

During his graduation, I could not help but be proud as he walked up the stage when he was called and recognized as one of the outstanding students. All the hard times he had been through flashed through my mind.

I have witnessed my husband spend nights in the laboratory because his experiments were not giving good results but he kept going until he would get one. I cried with him whenever he would receive an email that the scientific journal that he worked hard for was rejected for publishing by the editor. But he was determined to continue and he did not let rejection hinder him from finishing his postgraduate degree. He took hold of what was in the end



rather than the momentary trials he was faced with. He just did not quit. It was not in his vocabulary.

Whenever I go through struggles, I just look at my husband as an example. I have a partner who perseveres in every trial and gives his best in attaining his dreams. And our daughter is blessed to have a father who will teach her to keep fighting, to keep standing when she falls, to persevere and be triumphant.

There are so many things we want to accomplish. We have goals, short-term and long-term that we desire to achieve. But life will throw challenges that will try to hinder and discourage us from

reaching our dreams. We either let them pull us down or catapult us to greater things. We either let them discourage us or inspire us to get going.

As I see videos and pictures of my family and friends attend graduation ceremonies in the Philippines this month, I could not help but smile in amazement and with pride. They are beautiful examples of perseverance.

According to www.vocabulary.com, perseverance is the quality of being determined to do or achieve something and having firmness of purpose. It is not giving up. It is persistence and tenacity, the effort required to do something and keep doing it till the end, even

if it's hard. It comes from the Latin word *perseverantia*, which means to abide by something strictly.

People who have achieved great things in life are all people who have such quality. We wouldn't have amazing inventions today if not for the people who diligently and persistently overcame rejections and trials to achieve their goals. We might not have great leaders in our society had they given up along the way.

Whether it's winning the heart of a loved one, learning a new language, earning a degree, climbing a mountain, or simply finishing a project, they all require perseverance.

My husband may have endured difficulties in gaining his PhD but the sense of fulfillment of finally finishing what he has started far outweighs what he has gone through. He is now called Dr. John Marc Puguan.

He may have faced three big NO's but my 'YES' was way bigger and definitely better. As he would always say, it was worth it.

Indeed, in life, perseverance has great rewards.

OPEN FORUM

Teaching 'Life Lessons' For Our Students

By Jose Bulatao, Jr.

Government officials, educators and community advocates wield tremendous authority in shaping the direction and future of Hawaii's educational system. They have the authority to direct, empower and provide the means of promoting "life lessons," healthy lifestyles

and other important choices for our state's public school system.

Wouldn't it be wonderful for the state to establish a cohesive program presenting an array of units of study at all grade levels, campus-centered activities and projects that emphasize ways for students to look after themselves, each other and the environment?

Such a program would go

a long way towards addressing many challenges facing our youth today—bullying, childhood obesity, making the right decisions when it comes to one's personal health and well-being, dealing with mood swings and coping with the stress of daily life—to name just a few. These are all valuable life lessons and skills that young people today should be learn.

Education, which was once a pathway for the privileged, is now a highway for the masses.



As such, there is more to education than the gathering of information or the ability to score well in testing situations. Basic life skills such as personal finance, time management, cooking, manners/etiquette perhaps need to be taught. For students to become successful and productive adults, schools need to do more than focus on academics.

Those who work in the realm of public service need to sit down with the "movers and shakers" of the educational system and discuss ways of incorporating the importance of incorporating these life skills a major component of students' learning experience.

This may be the key in dealing with many of the problems facing our youth which have been inadequately addressed. Please "talk story" with one another, contact members of the Board of Education and discuss it with parents and students. Sharing this idea with others may help to stimulate more support and participation. It's something certainly worth doing for the sake of our children's future!

JOSE BULATAO, JR. is a retired educator living in Kekaha, Kauai

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Kauai Philippine Cultural Center Breaks Ground

At long last, Kauai residents held a groundbreaking ceremony on March 29, 2016 for the much-anticipated Kauai Philippine Cultural Center in Lihue.

Hundreds attended the event, including U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, who described the center as a place for cross-cultural exchanges that will promote and enhance culture, education, and provide social platforms for the island's multi-ethnic community.

"The Kauai Philippine Cultural Center will be a special gathering place where future generations will immerse themselves in their family's rich history and sacrifices, embrace a connection with other families who share similar stories of challenges and triumph, and cultivate pride and appreciation for the contributions of those before us, while forming new traditions of their own," she says.



Rep. Tulsi Gabbard addresses Garden Isle residents from across the island who gathered to bless the land that will soon be the foundation for the Kauai Philippine Cultural Center. Photo courtesy: Office of Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard

The center would not be for use by Filipinos only, but also by other ethnic groups and members from all walks of life, and offer a variety of programs for both youth and senior citizens to assist them in their transition to life in the U.S.

The vision for the center

began in 2010, led by Kauai Filipino Chamber of Commerce President Lester Calipjo. Several community stakeholders representing the business community, Filipino organizations, and other non-profits have since worked together to continue fundraising and ensure the project's com-



Sabra Kauka bless the land at the future site of the Kauai Philippine Cultural Center with Gov. David Ige, KPCC president Lester Calipjo, Mayor Bernard Carvalho Jr., Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, Hawaii Senate President Ron Kouchi, Rep. Jimmy Tokioka, Philippine Consul General Gina Jamoralin, architect Ian Costa, and representatives of the contractors, Cushnie Construction, E. Bueno Construction, and Taufatofua Masonry. Photo courtesy: Office of Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard

pletion. It is expected to be built in phases, with Phase I costing \$2 million and Phase II another \$3.5 million, according to 2014 estimates.

KPCC would be the state's third Filipino cultural

center, following Oahu's Filipino Community Center (Fil-Com), which opened in June 2002, and Maui's Binhi At Ani Filipino Community Center, which opened in January 2005.

The Filipinos of Kauai Dream of A Place for All, A Gathering Place for Everyone to Enhance Cultural, Educational and Social Programs as well as Promote Cross Cultural Exchange in Our Multi-Ethnic Milieu.



Please help us in this monumental undertaking. We humbly ask for your support and generous donations. All donations are tax deductible. To make a contribution, please call 808-645-0257 or go to our website at kauaiphilippineculturalcenter.org

THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS DREAM A REALITY!

KPCC held its groundbreaking ceremony last March 29, 2016 @ 3:00 p.m. on the lawn next to the YMCA swimming pool in Puhii (the future site of KPCC).

KAKATALK



By Carolyn W. Hildebrand

Getting the Word Out About Lumads' Struggles

guwangan, Manobo, Mansaka, Subanon, Tagakaolo, Tasaday, T'boli, Teduray, and Ubo.

I think the Lumads are among the original and enduring environmentalists in the Philippines. They assert that that land is life and a loving gift from the Creator.

The 1993 book, *Plundering Paradise: The Struggle for the Environment of the Philippines*, chronicles the environmental devastation in Mindanao and the Lumads' resistance up until 1990. The book says that for their concern for the fate of their forests, many Lumad leaders were termed Communists, detained and harassed by paramilitary forces, and their ancestral domains bombed by government military. In the mid-1980s, nine Lumad tribes came up with a compact or d'yandi to protect the sacred Mt. Apo or

imilar to Native Hawaiians who are the indigenous people of Hawaii, the Lumads or *Lumadnon* are the indigenous people of Mindanao. Lumad means "native" or "born of the soil."

After the Martial Law period, the term "Lumad" has come to distinguish Mindanao's indigenous uplanders from the equally indigenous Muslim groups and various other groups. It is a collective term for 18 different ethnolinguistic groups who share common ancestors, origin myths, and language origin. These groups are the Atta, Bagobo, Banwaon, B'laan, Bukidnon, Djabawon, Higaonon, Manawa, Mandaya, Man-



Apo Sandawa that was threatened by the government-owned Philippine National Oil Corporation (PNOC). PNOC wanted to build many roads and drill 40 geothermal wells.

Today, Lumads are under siege like they have never been since World War 2. This is because the national government, large-scale mining firms (mostly foreign-owned), and others are interested in a potential trillion dollar mining industry. Mindanao, it turns out, has 46% of the country's chromite deposits, 41% of its nickel, 34% of its gold, and 29% of its copper. However, large-scale mining operations do pollute and are devastating to ecological resources.

On January 18, during the 2016 International Food Justice Summit in Hawaii, Sarojeni Rengam of the Pesticide Action Network Asia and Pacific (PANAP) said that 53 of 68 recorded extrajudicial killings targeted Lumads. These killings occurred during the Aquino Administration since 2010. She said that fact-finding missions and working with UN Special Rapporteurs on human rights, rights to food, and rights of indigenous peoples can let the world know of this injustice.

On March 6, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, presented his report to the United Nations Human Rights Council. He considered the Lumad killings that occurred on September 17, 2015 to be "systematic of the aggressions suffered by human rights defenders in rural areas and indigenous

communities in response to violations committed in the course of environmentally dubious mining operations, widespread development of monoculture plantations, land grabs, and territorial disputes." He urged the Philippine Government to do all that it can to ensure that the extrajudicial killings do not go unpunished.

On March 7, BAYAN-USA's Bernadette Ellorin posted an open letter to Leonardo DiCaprio. She asked that the 2016 Oscar best actor awardee, who advocates for indigenous people rights, learn more about the Lumads' struggle. She mentioned that 3,000 Lumads have been forced to evacuate due to the militarization of their communities and schools. She hinted that increase in US military aid to the Philippines can aggravate current militarization in Lumad communities.

Last March 8, the Manila-based St. Scholastica College gave a Hildegard Award to Inday Espina-Varona. The award brought back public attention to the journalist's op-ed piece, "They're killing teachers and children, Mr. President" which was originally published on September 17, 2015.

Of the murders in Bukidnon, she wrote:

"I am sure you can empathize with a 15-year Manobo boy from Sitio Mando, Barangay Mendis, Pangantucan, Bukidnon...He did not just hear the murders of his kin, Mr. President. He actually begged soldiers to spare their lives, appealing that his father, brothers and cousins be jailed if, indeed, they did something wrong...His

father was 70 and blind; his brother 20 and 19 years old. One of this cousins was 13 years old; the other 17. They shot father, brother, cousins, one by one."

Of the murders in Surigao Sur, she wrote:

"On September 1, the head of a lumad alternative school was found murdered...Emerito Samarca's students at the Alternative Learning for Agricultural and Livelihood Development (Alcadev) discovered his body inside the school. They had rushed to inform him of soldiers and paramilitary herding people out of their homes...Their nightmares started the day before when armed men torched the cooperative beside the Alcadev. They had also gone around homes looking for several men, including the datu. As they went from house to house, they accused residents of being NPAs and the school, a training ground for guerillas...These same children saw Dionel Campos and his cousin Belio Sinzo shot dead by the armed men on September 1. Campos was chair of the Malahutayong Pagkabisog alang sa Sumusunod (MaPaSu). The organization was instrumental in putting up Alcadev."

There is an abundance of online information and updates about the Lumads' struggles. In Hawaii, one can watch out for any future presentations by local lawyer, Reyna Ramolette Hayashi, who visited Mindanao last November 2014. She personally learned about ALCADDEV and met its teachers and students, including the late Emerito "Emuk" Samarca.



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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

F-1 STEM Students Can Now Stay Longer

a 24-month extension of their post-completion OPT.

This means that the new rule that was published last March 11 gave international students earning a degree in these fields the chance to experience three years of on-the-job training. This gives them more time to expose themselves to valuable and practical STEM experience.

This is good news for a lot of students who want to gain more knowledge in their field of study. This is also great news for US employers who can benefit from their skills and know-how.

However, there are a lot to consider as the new rule is very strict when it comes to reporting.

In order for one to be eligible to apply for the extension, you have to have a

bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from a school that is accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting agency and is certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) when you submit your STEM OPT extension application. It is also important that your OPT must be in a field related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Should you have a non-STEM master's degree but you have a bachelor's degree in any of the fields mentioned, you can use your bachelor's degree to apply for a STEM OPT extension.

A formal training plan developed with your prospective employer is also necessary. You need to draw a plan where you and your future employer identify learning objectives

and the ways by which you envision to achieve these. In order to keep track of how these goals are being met, the DHS may conduct unannounced site visits when necessary.

The new rule also imposes a six-month validation requirement where you or your school must confirm the validity of certain information about you. This information may be about your home country, your address, current employment status and other biographical information. There is also a yearly self-evaluation that you will submit to your designated school official (DSO) detailing the progress of your on-the-job training. The employer must sign this evaluation.

Come May 10, USCIS will accept applications for STEM

OPT extensions. If you feel like you need more time to hone your skills here in the US, you must submit an I-765, Application for Employment Authorization together with an I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status, endorsed by your DSO.

You may also submit your application up to 90 days before your current OPT employment authorization expires, and within 60 days of the date your designated school official (DSO) enters the recommendation for OPT into your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record.

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

A new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rule just gave international students with F-1 visa two more years of on-the-job training here in the US.

Before, an F-1 student with a degree in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) from a US institution of higher education can apply for 17 months of OPT on top of the one year already allowed to them after graduating in a STEM field. Under the new rule, starting May 10, students can apply for

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Public Advised to Implement Anti-Mosquito Measures

State Department of Health officials are investigating four cases of travel-related mosquito borne viruses on Oahu. The cases include an individual who traveled to Latin America, returned ill and is being tested for dengue and Zika virus, as well as individuals who are being tested for dengue fever and chikungunya and have a history of

travel to the Pacific Islands and Latin America. All of the individuals have recovered.

Initial lab tests for the first individual were conclusive but further testing is being conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. State vector control teams have been assessing residential and other areas in urban Honolulu and along the North Shore to determine

if mosquito control measure such as eliminating mosquito breeding sites or spraying activities are necessary.

Following the DOH's announcement, Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell urged residents and visitors to take action against mosquitoes and their bites.

"Although there are no reported cases of locally transmitted Zika, dengue or

chikungunya here on Oahu, all of us should remain vigilant in fighting the bite," says Caldwell. "I urge all residents to remove standing water around their properties where mosquitoes breed and use insect repellent."

Urban Honolulu and North Shore residents who receive a flyer from the DOH are advised to read the information carefully and follow instructions on how to stop mosquitoes from breeding and prevent from getting bit.

The following are tips on how to "Fight the Bite":

- Eliminate standing water from buckets, puddles, etc.
- Fix leaky faucets and outdoor hoses that are dripping water.
- Treat bromeliads and

other plants that hold water.

- Clean gutters so water runs freely.
- Repair screens and jalousie windows to keep mosquitoes out.
- Dispose of old tires.
- Avoid activities in areas with lots of mosquitoes, and going outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are more active.

"This could become a serious health issue for our island and we must all do our part in the 'Fight the bite' campaign," says Caldwell. "If you feel ill with flu-like symptoms, please seek medical attention, especially if you've traveled to another part of the world recently."

Philippine Consulate to Observe Araw ng Kagitingan Ceremony

The Philippine Consulate General in Honolulu will observe the 74th anniversary of Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor) on April 16, 2016 at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific's Main Memorial Shrine from 2 pm to 4 pm.

The ceremony will pay tribute to all Filipino and American veterans who fought in defense of freedom during World War II. The Consulate is co-organizing the event with leaders of the Filipino community and the Fil-



ipino-American Veterans of World War II.

Araw ng Kagitingan will include speeches by guests of honor, the laying of memorial wreaths in honor of fallen soldiers, the playing of taps and a memorial gun salute.

Invited guests for Araw ng Kagitingan include state and city elected officials, military

officials, veterans, the Consular Corps of Hawaii and members of the Filipino community. The scheduled guest speaker is Jose L. Cuisa Jr., Philippine Ambassador to the U.S.

More information on Araw ng Kagitingan is available by calling the Consulate at 595-6316.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Council to Hear Bill to Waive Most Accessory Dwelling Unit Permit Fees

The Honolulu City Council will hear a bill that would waive certain fees for homeowners wishing to create an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), a move that could save up to \$9,000 to \$10,000 in application fees.

Bill 27 (2016) was drafted by the Department of Planning and Permitting in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Services, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services.

If approved, Bill 27 (2016) would waive all building permit, grading, and inspection fees, and wastewater facility charges, for a two-year period. It would also permanently waive park dedication requirements for ADUs. The Honolulu Board of Water Supply sets its fees through a separate rate process but the BWS staff has agreed to work on similar incentives.

An ADU is a secondary house or apartment with its own kitchen, living area and separate entrance that shares the building lot of a larger, primary house. The ADU may be attached to an existing house or garage, or it may be built as a stand-alone unit, but it usually uses the water and energy connections of the primary house and may be rented separately.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell hopes that the

temporary fee waiver will encourage homeowners who are considering adding a second unit on their property, or converting part of an existing structure, to act. He also challenges contractors and designers to come up with cost-effective designs that would help owners take advantage of these time-limited incentives.

"I think our building industry can use this opportunity to ramp up production with a few more incentives for homeowners," Caldwell said. "It should work just like the incentives we provided a few years ago to get the solar PV industry kicked off."

ADUs are just one part of the City's plan to provide affordable rental housing on Oahu. Municipalities on the mainland that have successfully incorporated ADU fee waivers and incentives have experienced increased production of ADUs. The city of Portland saw ADU production increase from approximately 30 units per year to over 200 units per year after permit fees were waived in 2010.

Homeowners who applied for an ADU permit and have already paid the fees will be refunded the fees should this measure be approved and signed into law. Those seeking an after-the-fact building permit to convert an illegally constructed structure into a legal ADU will not be eligible for the fee waiver.

PHILIPPINE NEWS

BIR Probes Players in Money Laundering

by Louise Maureen Simeon
Wednesday, March 30, 2016

MANILA, Philippines – The parties involved or suspected of involvement in the laundering of \$81 million stolen from the Bangladesh government are now in the crosshairs of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

"We're still looking into it. If taxes are properly paid, then we don't have any problem, but if not, then they will really have a problem. Whoever needs to be investigated will be investigated. Everything that needs to be looked at will be looked at," BIR Commissioner Kim Henares said yesterday.

"Every time that there is a controversy, whether it has legislative investigation going on, we look into it just to make sure that we are not negligent," she said, referring to the Senate Blue

Ribbon committee hearing on the issue.

"I don't know whether we have any audit going on with anyone involved, but from the event, whatever needs to be looked into, we will," she added.

The Senate Blue Ribbon committee has resumed its probe on the case with the intention of recommending amendments to the Bank Secrecy Law and the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA).

"I've always said that they should lift the bank secrecy law because we should not be complicit in allowing crime to be committed successfully," the BIR chief pointed out.

"Government function is to prevent crime and if there's a crime committed, make sure people are properly punished," she said.

Hackers stole the \$81 million, which ended up in spurious deposits in the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and in casinos. (www.philstar.com)

Q & A

AYONON TO LEAD KAUAI FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

by Chona Montesines-Sonido



leader has the vision and conviction that a dream can be achieved. He inspires the power and energy to get it done."

—Ralph Lauren

In today's modern world of email, social media and texting, a chamber of commerce may seem outdated way of doing business. But in reality, a chamber of commerce is still one of the best ways to network with other business executives.

For Filipino business owners on Kauai, the Kauai Filipino Chamber of Commerce (KFCOC) offers an array of activities that strategically connects them with fellow entrepreneurs and helps to grow their businesses. Leading the KFCOC is Oahu-born Bobby Ayonon who was recently installed as its 16th president. He replaces outgoing president Eddie Topenio.

The goal and mission of KFCOC, which celebrated its 16th anniversary last January, is to promote, advance and stimulate interest and participation in business, industry, trade and commerce on the island of Kauai. It is an organization of business men and women who want the best opportunities for leadership, personal development, volunteerism and community service.

Ayonon is the youngest of seven siblings. He attended Waiialua High School where he graduated with a state medal in wrestling. After high school, he moved to San Diego and stayed for a few years, working various jobs. Feeling homesick, he returned to Hawaii and joined the Hawaii Air National Guard.

He met his wife Cyndi Sanchez from Kauai while attending college at UH-Manoa. They got married after Cyndi's graduation and were blessed with a son, Colby.

Ayonon began his career working for several air conditioning companies on Oahu and signed up for a federally-funded

job training program. Through that opportunity, he attended an apprenticeship school to become a journeyman in air conditioning and refrigeration and joined the Pipefitters Union. He worked hard to learn as much as he could in order to provide for his family.

Life was good and Ayonon's parents were proud of his accomplishments. But life was also unpredictable and the couple moved back to Kauai to care for Cyndi's dad when her mom passed away. He requested for a transfer and a few months later was offered a job at Oahu Air Conditioning. He received his contractor's license in 1991 and started his own business—Kauai Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, Inc.

"It wasn't easy to start a new business but determination and support from the Kauai people who were willing to give my new company a chance made it possible. It was a risk but it was my dream," says Ayonon.

He built his company over the past 25 years and now employs 11 people. About 10 years ago, he started another company on Oahu. It was his vision as well as the support and teamwork that he has had that helped him accomplish all of this.

In 2004 and 2011, the Pacific Business News ranked Kauai Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, Inc. as one of Hawaii's 50 fastest growing companies.

As new KFCOC's President, Ayonon decided to share his vision for leading the organization forward and into the future. His responses have been edited for space and clarity.

Q: Congratulations on being elected president of the Kauai



Bobby Ayonon with his wife, Cyndi

Filipino Chamber of Commerce! How does it feel to lead the premiere organization for Filipino businesses on Kauai?

A: It's an honor to lead the Chamber, to mentor and network with other businesses in our community and to diversify our membership. I am humbled to represent the Chamber and excited to see our new Filipino cultural center break ground by the end of March.

Q: Why did you decide to accept the position?

A: After serving as a director on the KFCOC for a few years, I became more involved in the Chamber's activities and plan to develop more programs to engage our young leaders and future businesses.

Q: What advantages are there for Filipino-owned businesses to join your organization?

A: At our quarterly meetings, they can introduce themselves, present displays about their company and network with others. Our new website also allows members to post photos and share information about their company.

Q: What initiatives will you focus on during your term?

A: My vision is to provide more job opportunities for our youth through educational training at our community college and by providing them with scholarship assistance. The KFCOC raises funds through a golf tournament and has awarded over \$100,000 over the past 15 years to deserving students who demonstrate financial need.

As the vice chair of the Workforce Investment Act, I recently attended a conference in Washington, D.C. to acquire knowledge on how this program can provide funding for job training programs in our community. As an air conditioning and refrigeration contractor, I began my career on a federally-subsidized program. I have established my own company, Kauai Air Conditioning & Refrigeration, Inc. which has grown to become a family owned operation. I want to share my knowledge with our youth and to urge them to pursue an education.

Q: Which priorities of your

predecessor will you be continuing?

A: To continue the Scholarship Program which is vital since many families on Kauai are unable to send their children to college. Scholarships can help change someone's life and contribute to their personal success.

Q: What are some of the bigger challenges facing KFCOC?

A: We support the first Filipino cultural center on Kauai but fundraising has been a challenge. The KFCOC donated \$50,000 and will continue to support it through future fundraising efforts. We were offered to sell a CD comprised of songs composed by some of Kauai's talented Filipino youth singers and arranged by Art Umezu. This as another opportunity to raise funds for programs that the Chamber supports such as Leadership Kauai and the cultural center.

Q: Currently, how many members does KFCOC have?

A: In 2015, we had 125 members and it has been growing. A new program called "Business on the Weekend" was started last year to bring together perspective members and share their business over lunch. Sponsors defray some of the costs along with prize giveaways.

Q: What is your plan to get more members actively involved in events and activities?

A: To attract prospective members to join the Chamber, we will offer interesting educa-

(continued on page 16)

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One Thing is Certain – Taxes

By Misha Day

April 15 is almost here and many of us have already paid our taxes. Let's not perpetuate the mistaken myth that blames the Democrats for why we pay more. The fact is that Republican tax policies over the last 36 years shifted the tax burden of our country from the very wealthy to us in the middle class.

If your parents have tax returns from 1980 or earlier, compare it to today's forms to see the shift in taxes and why you and I are paying more than we did before Republican tax reforms. The middle class lost these critical deductions, effectively raising the amount of income we must pay taxes on:

- Medical deduction
- Personal interest deduction
- Job expenses deduction

Look at Schedule A, Itemized Deductions. For many of us, medical insurance premiums eat up a big chunk of our paycheck. Before the Reagan revolution, all medical costs were write-offs: money paid for medical insurance premiums, our doctor visit co-pays, our cost shares of medicines, and so forth. There was no minimum percentage of AGI to subtract out first. It was all deductible – before Reagan.

If you paid, for example,



\$250 a month for a family plan, you got to lower your taxable income by subtracting that \$3000 from your AGI. That's huge reduction. The 1980s tax shifts instituted a 5% floor, then a 7.5% floor so that you could only deduct the medical expenses above that amount. Most of us don't pay more than 7.5% of our income in medical costs, so our medical deduction vanished. Without this deduction, our taxable income is higher by a few thousand dollars.

The personal interest deduction was also a huge, middle class tax break. Reagan reforms took that line off Schedule A completely. Previously taxpayers could write off all consumer interest – credit cards, car loans, personal loans, student loans, etc. Look at any loan statement to see how much you pay for interest. All that interest keeps consumers in debt longer than the tuition or purchase price itself. Same with credit card interest. After Reagan, taxpayers stopped being able to reduce

their taxable income by deducting their interest payments, resulting in higher taxable income and hence higher taxes.

Job expenses was another place where we used to lower taxes by reducing our taxable income. Tools for work, education to maintain employment, buying or dry cleaning uniforms, and more – all these were fully deductible. Republican tax reform deprived taxpayers of this deduction by instituting a 2% floor. That means we can now only deduct the amount spent that is above 2% of income. Most of us spend 2% or less of our annual income on job expenses, which means we don't get to deduct any of it.

Reagonomics

Most people paid a lot less in taxes before Ronald Reagan became president and shifted the tax burden from the wealthiest Americans to the middle class. In 1981, shortly after being sworn in, Reagan signed into law a 23% tax cut, one of the largest since WWII. He pushed through even more tax changes

in 1982, 1984, and in 1986 overhauled the Internal Revenue Code. His 1981 and 1986 tax cuts alone slashed the tax rate on the richest people from 70% to 28%. That's an astonishing drop.

To make up for this steep loss in federal revenue, the middle class lost its tax breaks and paid more. Tax historian Joseph Thorndike noted that Reagan's 1982 and 1984 tax bills together "constituted the biggest tax increase ever enacted during peacetime." The bills didn't raise taxes by hiking the tax rates. His new tax laws reduced or eliminated existing tax breaks like the ones just described.

Besides these, Reagan tax laws also hit the middle class in the form of higher Social Security taxes. In 1983, his reforms increased the payroll tax rate, required seniors to pay income tax on their Social Security benefits, and required self-employed persons to pay the full payroll tax rate, not just the portion usually paid by employees. Taking away the medical, personal interest, and job expenses deductions left the middle class with higher taxable income. Combined with higher Social Security taxes, we started sending more of our hard earned money as taxes to the federal government.

Millions in New Revenue from the Middle Class Funds Tax Breaks for the Super Rich

Remember the old "Cosby" show episode where one daughter came home from school upset because her classmates

taunted her for being rich? The mother (played by Phylicia Ayers-Allen) clarified: "We aren't rich. We work for our money. Rich people's money works for them."

The top 2% of Americans – the very rich who don't have to work for a living and can put most of their money overseas away from the reach of the IRS because they don't need it for daily expenses -- got the benefit of that flood of new middle class tax revenue. The Gallo exemption, named after winemakers Ernest and Julio Gallo, was one. This enabled the super-rich to pass \$2 million to each grandchild without paying any taxes on the transfer. When the tax break was enacted, Jack Porter of the accounting firm BDO Seidman in Washington, illustrated the savings -- \$16 million in taxes avoided that otherwise would have been paid on a \$20 million transfer without it. The \$2 million benefit expired and a \$1 million exemption per grandchild took its place.

Avoiding \$16 million in taxes when you are as rich as the Gallo winemaking family -- let that sink in for a bit. The Reagan tax reforms raised middle class taxes by increasing Social Security taxes and abolishing middle class tax deductions (medical expenses, personal interest, and job related expenses) and leaving working taxpayers with a higher taxable income. The increase in tax revenues collected enabled the government to then give tax breaks to the very wealthy. Next time you want a tax break, lobby

(continued on page 17)



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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Q & A (from page 15, AYONON ...)

tional speakers at our quarterly meetings, along with opportunities to network with other businesses. "Businesses helping businesses" is going to be my motto for the year.

Q: Tell us more about yourself.

A: I was born in Wahiawa on Oahu, grew up in Haleiwa and attended Waialua High School. I also attended Honolulu Community College where I earned my journeyman license as an air conditioning mechanic with the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 675 Union.

I have been married to Cyndi Sanchez Ayonon for 35 years. I have one son Colby

who works for my business along with his wife Maja. They have two girls—Chloe, 7, and Cruz, 5.

Q: From whom or what do you draw your inspiration from?

A: My inspiration comes from my family as they have supported me through the years in all of my endeavors. I come from a large family and as the youngest child, each of my brothers and sisters have had a positive influence in my life.

Q: What do you like to do during your free time?

A: I enjoy hunting on Lanai and for big game in Wyoming. My favorite pastime is babysitting my granddaughter

and watching them play soccer.

Q: What legacy do you want to leave behind when your term as KFCOC president is over?

A: I would like the Chamber to be open to all sectors of the community. I'd also like to make the Chamber more diversified—from all ages, ethnicities and types of businesses. The Chamber should be an organization where one feels welcomed to participate in our vision for education, leadership and a gathering place for all at our new cultural center.

It's an exciting time in our community, so get involved and join today!

TAX TIME

TAX TIME (from page 16, ONE THING)

Congress and the White House to reinstate the middle class's pre-Reagan tax deductions.

The Reagan myth was that he lowered taxes for Americans and led the country to prosperity through a leaner government is contradicted by the facts. Under President Carter the U.S. was the world's largest creditor. Four years of Reaganomics turned the U.S. into the world's largest debtor, with more debt than the next nine countries combined. The 40-year federal spending average before Reagan was 20.7%. Reagan's annual federal spending average was 22.4%, more than his Democrat predecessors.

Corporate Taxes

Businesses complain frequently that their taxes are too high. Just as with individual income taxes, much of the tax burden on domestic businesses is due to loopholes that benefit the wealthiest corporations. These credits and rules shift taxes away from large, extremely profitable companies and place it on companies run by hardworking, ordinary Americans who go home to their families after a long day at work. The biggest corporate tax credit is the foreign tax credit for taxes paid to foreign countries. Other income reductions include credits for certain types of wage payments, investments in allowable assets (such as some kinds of motor vehicles), use of alternative fuels, and others.

Deferral is one of the main reasons large corporations with global operations don't pay taxes. Taxes on foreign profits don't have to be paid until the profits come back to the U.S. As long as a company keeps its money outside our borders, they don't pay taxes on their profits. Conglomerates can set up a subsidiary in an overseas low-tax country, hold profits there to avoid paying taxes, and still have use of the money. How profitable are these tax laws to the wealthiest corporations? Eighty-three of the U.S.'s 100 biggest public companies keep a foreign subsidiary in a tax haven. (See table chart).

Taxes, the Federal Deficit, and Politics

Middle class tax breaks don't come automatically by

voting Republican, when it was Republican presidents and Congressmen who put those tax exemptions and loopholes there in the first place. President Reagan gave the U.S. our first trillion dollar deficit, exploding the federal debt by cutting taxes on the wealthiest Americans and pushing a huge expansion of military spending (much of it on profiteering defense contractors). He used the deficit to frighten Americans into social spending cuts which increased the suffering of lower income Americans. If you grew up in Hawaii in the 1960s and 70s, you may recall that Thomas Square was a place where families played and had picnics, not a home for the homeless. You may remember homelessness was not a national problem as it is now.

When Reagan said "Read my lips" and Papa Bush said "No new taxes", they weren't talking about ordinary, working Americans. They meant the very wealthy who didn't have to clock in every day. Both Reagan and Bush left the \$200,000 estate tax floor in place, but gave super rich Americans like the Gallo family millions of dollars in inheritance tax breaks, allowing them to pass money they didn't need to live on, down to their descendants tax-free. The tax floor means that if someone died with property valued more than \$200,000, the heirs paid taxes on the amount above the \$200,000 floor. Say, for example, your parents' home, the one you grew up in, was worth \$300,000. The \$100,000 value above the floor resulted in a \$55,000 tax that hit adult children hard. Most nanas and tatas want the house kept in the family to be there in case anyone hits hard times and needs a place to live, not sold to pay a hefty tax that the top 2% of Americans can avoid through overseas tax shelters and Gallo exemptions.

President Bill Clinton inherited the trillion dollar deficit from the Reagan-Bush administrations. Skillfully guiding the economy, Clinton brought the country back into a healthy federal surplus. Clinton promised Americans that if they worked hard, they'd get to keep the fruit of their labor. He lowered middle class taxes by raising that estate tax floor gradually, taking the \$200,000 up to \$1 million in

increments so that the government had time to adjust to the loss of revenue. Clinton helped the middle class keep their money in the family by raising the estate floor to avoid taxes.

The Clinton federal surplus was wiped out when President Bush (the son) took office, just as the Carter surplus had been turned into a trillion dollar deficit under Reagan-Bush. Bush gave us the country's second trillion dollar deficit. Like his Republican predecessors, Bush the younger again initiated a huge increase in military and national security spending while cutting taxes for the wealthiest 1-1/2% of Americans. To pay for the war in Iraq, Bush made the middle class pay more taxes by dropping Clinton's \$1 million estate floor down to \$600,000. How many of you in Hawaii are paying for a single family home that cost you in that range? Bush's floor drop meant that after working hard to pay the mortgage, your kids would have to pay inheritance tax on it after you died.

The economy famously collapsed in 2008, at the end of President Bush's term. It took the current Democrat, President Barack Obama, to cautiously steer the country away from teetering into a depression and bring it back to a surplus – a respectable \$70.5 billion in 2014. Like President Clinton, President Obama believes that hardworking Americans should be able to pass the fruit of their labors to their kids and grandkids. President Obama raised the estate tax floor to \$3.5 million during his first term and up to its current \$5.45 million in his second term. Your family gets to keep all of the rewards of your hard work with this higher floor, put in by a Democrat president.

Reagan and Bush weren't the only Republicans who raised taxes. In 2012, Rachel Maddow pointed out that Mitt Romney's record showed what he would do if elected to the White House. As governor Romney raised \$500 million in new revenue during his first year in office, more than any other state. The man with a car elevator for his nine cars raised the gasoline tax by two cents per gallon, extracting from Massachusetts residents \$60 million a year in additional revenue.

Romney also put into place 33 new fees and increases in 57

Company	Total Cash (billions)	Foreign Cash (billions)	% Foreign / Total Cash
Apple	110.2	74.0	67%
Microsoft	59.5	50.0	89%
General Electric	83.7	ca. 41.9	>50%
Cisco	46.7	41.7	89%
Google	49.3	25.7	48%
Oracle	29.7	25.1	84%
Johnson & Johnson	24.5	24.5	100%
Pfizer	24.0	ca. 19.2	ca. 80%
Amgen	19.4	16.6	82%
Qualcomm	26.6	16.5	62%
Coca-Cola	15.8	>13.9	>88%
Dell	13.9	ca. 11.8	ca. 85%
Merck	19.5	>9.2	>47.2%
Medtronic	8.9	8.3	93%
Hewlett-Packard	8.1	ca. 8.1	ca. 100%
eBay	8.0	7.0	88%
Wal-Mart	6.6	3.6	55%

Source: Wikipedia, reference: Cari Levine (20 September 2012), "PSI Memo on Offshore Profit Sharing and the U.S. Tax Code", United States Senate Subcommittee on Investigations, p. 6, retrieved 22 September 2012.

existing fees, which posed a hardship on those who could least afford them. Here's a few: higher costs for obtaining birth certificates, buying a new car, getting a driver's learning permit, firearms permits, professional licenses, and others. Romney even established fees for obtaining state services, such as for the state to certify that a blind person is blind and issuing a photo ID card for the blind. Romney proposed raising money by having people pay a \$50 fee for tuberculosis tests (free in Hawaii), and a \$400

penalty for those who tested positive, both of which were rejected by the Legislature.

Governor Romney generated revenue by imposing fees on his state's residents who could hardly afford it. All these increases came from a governor who in his 300+-page tax return, wrote off his wife's horse-riding hobby as a "business deduction" and avoids paying taxes on his enormous wealth by keeping most of his assets overseas, out of the reach of the IRS. Even conservatives complained that

(continued on page 18)



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PHILIPPINE NEWS

China's Airfields on Spratlys Meant for Fighter Jets – U.S.

by Jaime Laude
Wednesday, March 30, 2016

MANILA, Philippines – A senior US State Department official yesterday disputed China's claims that the airstrips built on its artificial islands in the South China Sea were meant for flights for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Colin Willet, US deputy assistant secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, said what China has been doing in the region was to outstrip all other claimants.

"The runways they've built are designed to accommodate strategic bombers, not cargo planes for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief," Willet told a group of journalists in a teleconference from the US embassy in Manila.

While it is true that other claimant countries have deployed military personnel and weapons on their outposts, Willet said, these are small compared to what China has been doing for the last two years.

There were also reports China has installed an anti-air

defense system over its man-made islands at Kagitingan (Fiery Cross), Zamora (Subi) and Panganiban (Mischief) reefs.

The three former obscure maritime outcrops are now home to newly built runways.

Beijing also installed missile batteries over its occupied Woody Island in the Paracel island group located north of the Spratlys.

"Frankly, what's going on here is far more than simply catching up. What China is doing vastly outstripped what all other claimants have done

over the past several decades," Willet said.

"When countries place weapons on their outposts and transform them into what can only be described as military bases, it sets the stage for others to follow suit and raises the risk of conflict as well as the prospect of a diplomatic solution," the state department official said.

China maintains its land reclamation activities in the region are not aimed at militarizing the area but for civilian purposes.

"We simply don't need these type of facilities to protect civilians, or assist distressed fishermen or monitor the weather," Willet said.

On China's moves of restricting freedom of navigation and overflight over the disputed region, she said it is also

causing a lot of concern, as this is a clear violation of international law.

"While China has pledged to protect freedom of navigation, we still see radio operators challenging foreign ships and planes that are operating in the area, warning them to stay away," she said.

Willet pointed out that US ships and planes have been sailing and flying over the region for decades to protect freedom of navigation and overflight.

She also pointed out that when the US conducts freedom of navigation, it is not meant at militarizing the region as China had claimed, but for the protection of navigation rights of all seafaring nations in order to ensure that they can all exercise this right, including China. (www.philstar.com)

IN PHOTOS: Marcos Jewelry Virtual Exhibit

MANILA, Philippines – The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) recently launched an online exhibit of selected pieces of jewelry confiscated from the Marcoses.

The selected pieces belong to the Hawaii jewelry collection, one of the three massive Marcos jewelry collections.

The US Bureau of Customs seized the collection upon the Marcoses' arrival in Hawaii in 1986. It is currently stored at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and under the custody of the PCGG. (www.philstar.com)



"If I didn't know where the collection came from, I would probably say it could have come from a royal person," said David Warren, who headed a Christie's auction house team that inspected the jewelry. He said the extensive collection includes very rare and exceptional pieces. AP/Bullit Marquez, file

TAX TIME (from page 17, ONE THING)

these fees were taxes in disguise from a governor who got elected on a promise that he would not raise taxes. Maddow affirmed - money paid to the government is a tax, no matter what it's called. The Tax Foundation analysis revealed that while nationally state taxes rose from 9.5% to 9.7%, in Massachusetts, Governor Romney raised the average tax rate in Massachusetts from 9.6% to 10.2%.

Voters should be cautious about braggadocio Donald Trump, who is embroiled in three legal actions (California, Florida, and an Attorney General's suit in New York) over his Trump University fraud scams. More than 5000 victims in New York alone claim they were cheated out of \$40 million. Ten other fraud lawsuits resulted from his default of a \$139 million loan on his botched International Hotel & Tower project. Trump's four bankruptcies (1991, \$3.4 billion -- 1992, \$550 million -- 2004, \$1.8 billion -- 2009, \$1.74 billion) and firing an advisor who warned him about failure (the Taj Mahal bankruptcy), are reliable indicators of how reckless he will be if we hand over the country to him as commander in chief. When banks and vendors lose millions to people like Donald Trump, they make up that loss by charg-

ing higher fees and paying lower savings accounts returns to regular people like us. Doug Heller, Executive Director of Consumer Watchdog, noted that Trump's bankruptcies highlight the hypocrisy of how easy it is for the very rich to get millions of dollar of their debts erased because banks are at their mercy, while the average American with insurmountable medical or divorce bills is put through the grinder before their debts are forgiven if they are forgiven at all.

The implications for the current political scene? Bringing economic fairness and justice to our country will take a president who has the courage to stand firm against pressure to continue a status quo that benefits only the richest 2% and stand up for the 98% of Americans who work hard and deserve a break. Hawaii has felt the Bern. Let's hope the rest of the country feels it, too.

Sources: Wikipedia; MSNBC; Glenn Wright, "Ronald Reagan Began U.S. Government Deficit-Spending Addiction," *The Examiner*, February 6, 2011; Greg Robb, "U.S. Posts \$70.5 Billion June Budget Surplus," *Market Watch*, July 11, 2014; Jeanne Sahadi, "America's Debt Crisis – Taxes: What People Forget About Reagan," *CNN Money*, September 12, 2010; Amy Bingham, "Donald Trump's Companies Filed for Bankruptcy Four Times," *ABC News*, April 21, 2011.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FILIPINO FILM FESTIVAL | April 2-16, 2016 | Opening-Night Reception: April 2, 6-7:30 p.m. to be held at the LUCE PAVILION CAFE inside the museum but entrance is through Doris Duke Theatre entrance (on Kinau Street). Opening-night tickets cost \$35 (non-museum members) and \$30 (for museum members) and includes dinner with no host bar. ALL FILMS WILL BE SHOWN AT DORIS DUKE THEATRE, HONOLULU MUSEUM OF ARTS. Film prices tickets cost \$10 (general), \$9 (museum members), Free for 17 + under with the exception of special events. | Call: 808-532-3033 for further information or purchase tickets at honolulumuseum.org/event/films

74TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE "ARAW NG KAGITINGAN" OR DAY OF VALOR | April 16, 2016 | 2:00 - 4:00 PM | NATIONAL MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF THE PACIFIC (NMPC) | Contact the Consulate at 595-6316.

FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HI'S 2016 FILIPINO AND YOUNG FILIPINO ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AND SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS BANQUET | April 16, 2016 | 7:00 AM | ALA MOANA HOTEL | Contact: Rocky Anguay @ 808-696-7970

MAUI FILIPINO CHAMBER FOUNDATION ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT | April 23, 2016 | THE DUNES @ MAUI LANI | Call 808-873-8605 or email foundation@mauifilipinochamber.com for details.

ANNUAL TERNO BALL, HAWAII FILIPINO WOMEN'S CLUB (HFWC) | April 30, 2016 | 6:00 PM | ALA MOANA HOTEL, HIBISCUS BALLROOM | Contact Nelly Pongco Liu @ 228-7808 or Carlota Ader @ 688-3215

11TH ANNUAL FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MANAOAG | April 28 - May 6, 2016: Nightly Novena at 7:00 PM | May 7, 2016 | HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH, 830 MAIN ST., HONOLULU, HI 96818 | For information: Cely Querido at (808) 368-8052/email: celyq@savio.com or Fred Martinez at (808) 358-8049/email: fmar10nez@yahoo.com

UNITED PANGASINAN OF HAWAII 48TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER & DANCE | May 14, 2016 | PACIFIC BEACH HOTEL GRAND BALLROOM | Tickets & Information: Cely Villareal - (808) 778-2481 or (808) 689-4911

FILCOM CENTER'S 24TH ANNUAL FILIPINO FIESTA & PARADE | May 14, 2016 | KAPIOLANI PARK, WAIKIKI | For details, contact 808-680-0451

STROKES OF BRILLIANCE, HOSTED BY PHIL SABADO, CO-SPONSORED WITH MAUI FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | May 26, 2016 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM | KAUNOA SENIOR CENTER, 401 ALAKAPA PL., PAIA, HI 96779 | Contact: (808) 270-7308

MAUI FILIPINO CHAMBER'S GINTONG PAMAMA'S LEADERSHIP AWARDS BANQUET | June 16, 2016 | MAUI BEACH HOTEL. | Contact: Jenna Gamboa at (808) 419-1617

FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS | July 16, 2016 | 6:00 PM | TAPA BALLROOM, HILTON HAWAIIAN VILLAGE | Contact: Bernadette Fajardo @ 342-0890

SANTANIANS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII-USA INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS | July 16, 2016 | 6:00 - 11:00 PM | HIBISCUS BALLROOM, ALA MOANA HOTEL | Contact: Dr. Julius Soria (722-9958); Amy Quides (255-6380); Aurora Garcia (722-3150) or email santaniansofhiusa@gmail.com

FILCOM CENTER'S BAYANIHAN GALA DINNER 2016 | October 14, 2016 | 6:00 PM | SHERATON WAIKIKI HOTEL | Contact 808-80-0451 for more information

PASKO SA FILCOM | December 4, 2016 | FILCOM CENTER | Contact 808-680-0451 for details.

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Hawaii, baknangan ti Ilokano a nagaget Naanus nga agsukay, pagtatalonan naruay Nadumaduma, sapulen ta kaibatogan Maumaka nga agpili no utekmo narn-uoyan.

Hawaii, lugar a kalatakan Kabassitan nga isla ngem maap-apalan Amin a makadamag kayatna a sangladden Napigsa a payapayna di masarkedan

PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE



DAYASADAS
By Pacita Saludes

Semana Santa (Holy Week) Iti Hawaii

Oti bukod a paliw no madanon ti Semana, ad-adu dagiti Filipino a maobserbar a mang-sursurot pay laeng kadagiti dati a panagselebrar ti Semana Santa. Ti Domingo de Ramos, manmano kadagiti sabali a puli ti tumulad kadagiti Filipino a dida sumrek iti simbaan nga awan ti ramos (holy branch) nga iggemda ngem nakatulad metten dagiti dadduma a Pinoy a sumrek metten iti simbaan nga imaima. Isu ti tradision ket rum-beng nga aramiden sigun ngamin ti nakaisigudan (Spanish Way). Mas-apul nga adda latta bulong wenno sanga a wagwagen kabayatan ti misa. Napateg daytoy nga idulin kas anib a nasantuan iti pagtaengan bayat ti makatawen.

Segun ti obserbasion, uray Filipino no dadduma dida metten ikankano dagitoy nasantuan a pam-

mati idiy pagilian. Idiy Pilipinas awan ti agrabaho no Viernes Santo. Awan ti tumagari ken agkakatawa ta isu ti aldaw ti panagrigrigat ni Apo Jesus ken pannakatayna. Awan ti makasida ti karne agingga iti Domingo Paskua (Easter Sunday) a panangungar ti Apo. America di-

Disso a pagdidinnamagan Pagbaknangan dagiti napanglaw Maysamaysa manggundaway nga umay Iti uray ania a pamuspusan.

Tay balasang nga Ilokano ambisiosa Uray addan nakaigalutanna No adda Hawayano nga agpre-senta Likudanna karinkari a nalagda.

Napagasatan a dimteng "Impiernu ken Gloria" Dimitengda kano't Hawaii awan in-inanada Parbangon no sumalogda,

toyen kunada. Adda kadi nasion a lisian ti pagalagadan wenno panagraem ti Dios? Dayta ti maysa nga saludsod. Nupay no kasta, nagungaren ti Apo ket adda tayo manen ti baro a biag. Baro a pammati - sip-siputan ti Dios ti amin nga ar-armiden tayo. Isu ti kibin ti amin a ballaigi tayo, isu ti mangsarsaranay kadatayo iti amin a rusat tayo. Thank you Lord! Happy Easter!

HAWAII A MAAP-APALAN

malemton no agawidda Ay, gasat, kastoy gayam ti Hawaii yas-asugda.

No di maiwaksi tay kinasulit Ditoy Hawaii, di panunoten ti ag-naed Rigatnan, Apo! Sumken ta babawi Awan inana, balud inggat inggana. Hawaii, taeng da ragsak No naanuska nga aggaud iti bini-gat Naamo ti doliar a kumarab-as Amin a kayat, ipaayna saan a mawas Disso nga ap-apalan, pangnamna-maan



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