



FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIALS

Volunteers Buoy OMM Medical Missions

The Ohana Medical Mission (OMM) will soon be leaving Hawaii for its 10th mission of mercy to the Philippines. The overall goal of the mission, scheduled for December 10-24, 2016, is to provide free medical services, medicines and other equipment to the poor and needy people of select *barangays* and provinces in the Philippines. The mission will spread Christmas cheer and goodwill to those who otherwise would have very little to celebrate during the Yuletide Season.

One obvious characteristic among all OMM mission members is the spirit of volunteerism. A volunteer is simply someone who is compassionate, kind and more than anything, selfless. He or she puts the needs of others before themselves and do not hesitate to share what they have. Such a trait aptly fits OMM's dedicated volunteers, who will be toiling long hours under less-than-ideal conditions. Most are repeat volunteers who have participated in previous missions, while a handful are first-timers. Seasoned volunteers return home with an incredible sense of personal fulfillment and accomplishment which keeps them returning year after year. They also pay their own way and on average spend up to \$5,000 out-of-pocket for airfare, lodging and meals—a cost they say is well worth it.

Volunteerism also knows no age limit. From the very young to the very old, there is no shortage of volunteer opportunities—from baby-sitting to church events, school opportunities and charity work. Studies have shown that volunteering is good for one's health, especially for those over age 65. According to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, adults ages 50 and older report the greatest amount of "subjective well-being" among all age groups "and are happiest while socializing, working or volunteering." And in two independent studies by the American Geriatrics Society and the Corporation for National and Community Service, volunteers have greater longevity, higher functional ability, lower rates of depression and less incidence of heart disease.

A handful of OMM's volunteers are in fact senior citizens who choose to keep active by doing miscellaneous volunteer work. One volunteer, a spry 84-year-old retiree, has spent several afternoons packing and sorting out mountains of medication and supplies for the OMM's upcoming mission. She and other dedicated seniors with OMM and their "can-do" attitude make every place they volunteer at simply better.

A big mahalo to OMM and their volunteers for their willingness to help the poor and needy people of the Philippines. Their efforts may at times be overlooked or go unnoticed but as Yoko Ono once said, "Every drop in the ocean counts." Helping others is an essential purpose of our existence here on God's good earth. After all, to be human is to be humane and characterized by tenderness and compassion, especially for the suffering or distressed.

Significance of Pearl Harbor

Throughout the month of December, dozens of events will be held on Oahu to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Tens of thousands of visitors, foreign dignitaries, elected officials and VIPs from around the world are expected to attend scheduled receptions, film screenings, concerts, live performances and other important moments.

On December 7, 1941, the "date which will live in infamy," Japan attacked Pearl Harbor—the operating base of the U.S. Pacific Fleet—and six other military bases without a formal dec-

FROM THE PUBLISHER

A

loha and welcome to this latest edition of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle! At press time, we received word that the U.S. House of Representatives had just unanimously approved a bill that awards the Congressional Gold Medal to Filipino veterans of World War II. The news, which comes just in time for the 75th Anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, thrilled Filipino veterans and their supporters who spent months relentlessly lobbying Congress for the bill's passage. For more on this exciting development, turn to page 10.

This issue's cover story focuses on the Ohana Medical Mission and the preparations being undertaken for its 10th mission to the Philippines. Led by overall mission chair Dr. Romeo Perez, OMM's volunteer medical professionals this Christmas season will bring the gift of good health to the impoverished indigenous people of the Philippines. We wish them a safe and successful journey. Please read more about OMM's mission beginning on page 4.

Also in this issue, Chronicle columnist Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand reports on a recent community meet-and-greet session at the Philippine Consulate with Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Perfecto Yasay, Jr. who was appointed to his position in July. He is an outstanding lawyer who specializes in corporate law and securities regulation. A close friend and former college roommate of President Rodrigo Duterte, Yasay spoke candidly about several pressing matters involving the Philippines and the president. Read more on page 11 about Yasay and his responses to questions from attendees at the town hall meeting.

Speaking of the Chronicle, columnist Carlota Ader has been named the 2016 Filipino Business Woman of the Year by the Filipino Business Women's Association. She is the president and owner of CHA Services. Congratulations Carlota! More on Carlota's numerous business and personal accomplishments is available on page 5.

In other news, the City will hold the 32nd annual Honolulu City Lights celebration on Saturday, December 3, 2016. Among the evening's many highlights is the Electric Light Parade and dazzling procession of festooned city vehicles and school marching bands. The event has become a favorite island Christmas tradition with thousands expected to attend. If you're planning to attend, see page 7 for further details.

In closing, thank you for faithfully supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. Please take some time to read the other informative articles and columns we have for you in this issue and as always, please feel free to email us at: filipinochronicle@gmail.com with story ideas, suggestions or concerns you may have. We would love to hear from you!

Until our next issue...aloha and mabuhay!

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

laration of war. Among the casualties were 2,403 U.S. personnel and 68 civilians killed in action, and 19 U.S. navy ships, including 8 battleships, which were destroyed and/or badly damaged. Within a matter of hours, public sentiment changed radically. Our nation at that time was battling economic distress and in no mood for war. Stung by the surprise attack, President Roosevelt asked Congress for and received a declaration of war against Japan. A few days later, Germany and Italy, allied with Japan, declared war on the U.S. The great fight was on.

With the U.S. no longer on the sidelines, the entire nation poured its resources into the war effort. America emerged as a world power, providing millions of troops, including soldiers, scouts and guerilla fighters from the Philippines who fought alongside Americans. Factories halted production to manufacture vehicles, planes and equipment. Women also joined the war effort by working in factories and enlisting. Imagine if the U.S. had remained neutral and not joined the Allied powers. The out-

(continued on page 3)

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

Publisher & Managing Editor
Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

Associate Editors
Dennis Galolo | Edwin Quinabo

Contributing Editor
Belinda Aquino, Ph.D.

Creative Designer
Junggoi Peralta

Photography
Tim Llena

Administrative Assistant
Shalimar Pagulayan

Columnists

Carlota Hufana Ader
Emil Guillermo
Ruth Elynia Mabanglo, Ph.D.

Ron Menor

J.P. Orias

Pacita Saludes

Reuben S. Seguritan, Esq.

Charlie Sonido, M.D.

Cong. Mark Takai

Emmanuel S. Tipon, Esq.

Felino S. Tubera

Sylvia Yuen, Ph.D.

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Rose Churma

Serafin Colmenares, Jr., Ph.D.

Julia Crowley

Linda Dela Cruz

Fides Doctor

Danny De Gracia, II, MA

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Caroline Julian

Raymund Li. Liogson, Ph.D.

Federico Magdalena, Ph.D.

Deborah T. Manog

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Paul Melvin Palabay, M.D.

Renelaine Bontol-Pfister

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Lilia Q. Santiago, Ph.D.

Jay Valdez, Psy.D.

Glenn Wakai

Amado Yoro

Philippine Correspondent:

Greg Garcia

Neighbor Island Correspondents:

Big Island (Hilo and Kona)

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Kauai

Millicent Wellington

Maui

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Amylou Aguinaldo

Nestor Aguinaldo

Jimmy Ilreta

Maui Distributor

Cecile Piros

Molokai Distributor

Maria Watanabe

Oahu Distributor

Yoshimasa Kaneko

Jonathan Pagulayan

Advertising/Marketing Director:

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

Account Executives

Carlota Hufana Ader

J.P. Orias

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CANDID PERSPECTIVES



By Emil Guillermo

For American Filipinos—the ones lucky enough to have left their ancestral home—the news was obscured and barely covered.

It's as if Duterte and the Philippines elite pulled a fast one. A hasty hero's burial in the homeland for the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos? If you haven't noticed, we live in a time where the political trend is quite simple. Things that were once thought to be downright "inconceivable" are happening right now and with stunning regularity.

We're seeing it in the U.S. and the Philippines in the democracy built in its own image. Marcos, the plundering, human rights violator—the man who inspired a Peoples' Revolt—now considered a hero? It's not fake news, it's real. Despite protests heard around the world and in the U.S., the unthinkable finally happened in the Philippines.

Heavily preserved and unburied since 1989, Marcos finally got covered up with some hallowed dirt. Once they got a green light from the Supreme Court in the Philippines, Imelda Marcos and her family couldn't wait to put the Philippines' democratic embarrassment into the ground as a hero.

The last-minute "hero's

Duterte Can Bury Marcos But Not The Past

"burial" for Marcos was another win for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, the Filipino Trump, who manages to do as he pleases...justice be damned.

"I'm just being legalistic about it," said Duterte to the media. "He was president, he was a soldier. That's about it."

Duterte was spectacularly modest about his political achievement. This time, his wish was to honor his personal hero, a man who Amnesty International says imprisoned 70,000 people during martial law, tortured 34,000 and killed 3,240 Filipinos.

Small numbers compared to Duterte's current effort to fight shabu, the Asian form of crystal meth. The anti-drug effort by police has officially racked up 2,500 deaths. But Philippines media says the death toll is closer to a number that outdoes Marcos—4,000. And that number includes innocent civilians.

These are the so-called extra-judicial killings that have concerned President Obama and members of the U.S. Senate. Duterte responded by calling Obama a "son of a whore." Duterte talks tough and has years to catch up with Marcos, who not only imprisoned, tortured and killed his political opponents but also plundered the country's treasury and enriched his family by more than \$10 billion. That's more than double what Trump's worth.

Propped up by the Reagan and Bush administrations,

EDITORIALS

(from page 2, SIGNIFICANCE....)

come of World War II may very well have been entirely different and we could be living in a vastly different world.

Organizers have warned the public of traffic gridlock and other delays that are expected as a result of the various celebratory events, so please extend your patience. The 75th anniversary celebration will honor the dwindling few Pearl Harbor survivors, those of the "Greatest Generation" both civilian and military



Marcos ruled the Philippines with an iron hand for nearly three decades and was laid to rest in the country's national Cemetery For Heroes on November 17—Libungan ng mga Bayani, in Manila.

After being on display in his home province in northern Luzon, Marcos was quickly flown to Manila and buried in an almost secretive way. No press was allowed, meaning that protesters had no advance warning of the ceremony. Philippine Vice President Leni Robredo called it a "hidden burial." Others called it just plain "sneaky." Sort of like the man being falsely dubbed a hero.

Even though political opponents had 15 days to file an appeal, the Marcos family and the Philippine Army were able to rush the body to burial. And then the Marcoses posted scenes from the burial on social media. It was an insult to the thousands of protesters worldwide, including many of the four million Filipinos in America, nearly 20 percent of the

tory but we can still look back on that day and be proud that we live in a country where people forget themselves and do whatever it takes to help others in a time of need and unite toward a common goal. The events of that date not only forever changed Hawaii but also triggered our resolve as a nation, our can-do attitude, resourcefulness and unmatched commitment to the defense of freedom.

Asian-American population.

Most of them came to the U.S. for just one reason—to escape the Marcos years. They didn't want to be among the thousands who died or the millions repressed because of Marcos' autocratic rule.

Allowing the burial legitimizes the Marcos repressive dictatorship and sends a sad, dark message about Duterte to the Filipino people and the world. Democratic rule? Rule of law? Does it exist in Duterte's world? Or did they bury all that too with Marcos? But what exactly did they bury? A body kept from natural decomposition held firm by chemicals and cosmetics. The life and spirit are gone but the legacy of Marcos' misdeeds have not been forgotten.

The protests were immediate in Manila, with yet another one on what was dubbed "Black Friday" in the Philippines. More protests are spreading throughout the Philippine diaspora with

protests planned for next week in the U.S.

Will it make a difference? It isn't likely to force a dis-in-tainment. But it will show the Marcoses and Duterte that there's a new generation of millennials, representing the future of the Philippines, who reject the burial and all that the Marcos family stands for. It's the same new generation that were kept from the real history of Marcos' action.

The basic fact is this—bringing down Marcos was the inspiration for "People's Power."

Burying him as a hero can only reinforce the notion that the government doesn't always have the peoples' best interests at heart.

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.

PHILIPPINE CONSULATE TO CLOSE FOR HOLIDAYS

The Philippine Consulate General in Honolulu will be closed to the public for the upcoming holiday season. The Consulate will be closed on Monday, December 26, 2016 for Christmas and on Friday, December 30, 2016 in observance of Rizal Day and Bonifacio Day. For emergencies, please call the Consulate's duty officer at (808) 253-9446.



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COVER STORY

OMM Gears Up for 10th Mission to Philippines

By Dennis Galolo



embers and volunteers from the Ohana Medical Mission (OMM) are making final preparations for its landmark tenth mission to the Philippines, which will take place December 10-24, 2016 to select areas in Luzon.

The mission will provide medical, surgical, optical and dental services, along with humanitarian gifts for malnourished children and impoverished families. In total, volunteers hope to reach an estimated 10,000 people.

Mission sites include Los Baños, Liliw and Nagcarlan (near the foothills of Mount Makiling in Laguna province); the fishing city of Navotas (north of Manila); Bagong Silang, a barangay of Caloocan near Metro Manila; Camiling (Tarlac); Paniqui (Tarlac) and Baguio City. Many of the people who will be helped are the poorest of the poor, including squatters who eek out a living in slums and dumpsites, with no jobs, healthcare and hope for a better future.

According to logistics director and planner J.P. Orias, this year's mission is bigger

than ever before.

"We will be covering more areas this time and it will be longer by about three days," he says. "We will also try to treat 2,000 more patients than before."

Organizing this year's mission has been more challenging due to new regulations required by the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte which has taken a greater interest in tracking the work of foreign medical mission teams. In previous missions, Orias routinely sent correspondence to the Philippine Department of Health but often got no response. This year, he received a reply within a span of several days.

"That's never happened before," he says. "We now have to comply with rules that were not enforced previously," says Orias. "We are required to provide documentation of

medicines and supplies that we bring in and to also certify the backgrounds of our volunteers. In a way, it means more work because we have to follow certain formats but it's also good because it validates our purpose for being there."

Treatments will be provided for common medical issues in children such as malnutrition, parasitism, respiratory tract infections, dermatosis, primary complex and other gastrointestinal ailments. For adults, problems typically include hypertension, arthritis, colds/asthma, dermatitis, migraine, diabetes and arthritis.

This year's mission, according to Orias, will be more complete and offer optometry, dental and psychiatric services. The team has expanded their scope of treatment to include these services as dictated by demand.

Aloha From OMM

Chairing this year's mission is OMM President Dr. Romeo Perez. OMM is the outreach arm of the Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii (PMAH), an organization comprised mainly of doctors who were born, raised and trained in the Philippines and regularly give back to their home country via missions of mercy and humanitarian relief projects.

Planning for this mission began in May when Perez traveled to Baguio City to meet with local barangay captains to discuss sites and the medical needs of the people. He also divided up the roles and responsibilities of the 48-50 member strong medical team, half of whom will be



from the Philippines, including a dental team. Volunteers include physicians, nurses, paramedical professionals and support staff.

Perez has also spent hours soliciting and ordering much-needed medicines and medical equipment which volunteers have meticulously sorted and packed during the past few weeks. He estimates the worth of supplies at about \$500,000 with \$200,000 worth donated from Americares, a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing medicine, medical supplies and health programs.

Gently-used eyeglasses have been donated by the Lions Club and local ophthalmologist Dr. Michael McMann. Supplies have also been donated by Pali Momi Medical Center and Hawaii Pacific Healthcare.

Volunteers pay their own way, including the cost for airfare, lodging, meals and other expenses. Perez estimates each volunteer spends between \$4,000 to \$5,000 for the mission but that the cost is well worth it.

"This will be a mission of mercy," he says. "We love the Philippines and love helping

the poorest of the poor and others who are disadvantaged. Many of our volunteers keep coming back year after year because they enjoy it. In return, we get a tremendous sense of satisfaction and personal fulfillment."

Eager Volunteers

One such repeat volunteer is Fely Pula, a registered nurse at Hale Nani Rehabilitation & Nursing Center. This year marks her 10th mission. She was among the team members who in late 2013 traveled to Northern Cebu, Tacloban and surrounding towns in Leyte to assist victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan).

"We saw many sad stories unfolding before us that broke our heart," she recalls. "Deep down inside, I asked myself how it would feel if I were in their place."

That's the very reason, Pula says, that she joins missions year after year—to give back to those who are less fortunate and for personal as well as professional satisfaction.

On the flip side, this mission will mark the first for Agustina Balatico a retired nurse of over 20 years at Pali Momi Medical Center. Although she is no longer work-

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COVER STORY

(from page 4, OMM ...)

ing full-time, Balatico still volunteers much of her time at Pali Momi manning the information desk or doing paperwork, at Kapiolani Hospital knitting bonnets for infants and shelving books at Lanakila Elementary School library.

"It's the satisfaction I get from helping people that keeps me volunteering my time and energy," she says. "That's why I decided to join this year's mission. I'll do whatever it is that I am assigned to do."

Age is also no limit for volunteers. Take, for example, 84-year-old Fely Gualberto, a retired Queen's Medical Center operating room nursing assistant, who decided to join at the insistence of her niece Linda Guting.

"I felt the urge to offer my assistance and to help others in need," says Gualberto who prefers to volunteer much of



Dr. Russell Kelly (5th from right), Dr. Romeo Perez (6th from right) and other volunteers sort and pack medicines for the upcoming December 10 mission to the Philippines.

her time to keep active and fit.

Her assignment will be to assist the distribution of medicines to patients. She has already spent many hours sorting and packing boxes of medicines and supplies for the

mission.

As for Guting, 2016 marks her third mission with OMM. Doing so means she will take time off from running her carehome in Waipio which she has done for the

past 39 years but it's something she is more than willing to do.

"It's been my passion to participate in medical missions," says Guting, who is originally from Camiling, Tar-

lac. "It's very self-rewarding for myself to see the poor sick people getting the medical help that they need."

How to Help

Perez says there is still time for the Filipino community to help with the mission—either by donating money or time.

"We're a non-profit with no source of revenue except donations and fundraising, so we depend on our volunteers," he says. "Those who want to help us can start by sorting out medication. We've spent the past two weeks doing that. Others can also help with fundraising."

Donations can be made by calling JP Orias at 387-8297 or visiting OMM's website at: ohanamedicalmissions.org. Donations up to \$5,000 are tax deductible.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Ader Named FBWA 2016 Filipino Business Woman of the Year



Chronicle columnist Carlota Hufana Ader has been named the 2016 Filipino Business Woman of the Year by the Filipino Business Women's Association (FBWA).

Ader was recognized at FBWA's 33rd Annual Kimona Ball and Business Women of the Year Award presentation held November 19, 2016 at the Hawaii Prince Hotel. Ader is president and owner of CHA Services and is known for her decades of success in business, community activism, promoting the Filipino culture and supporting women's ad-

vancement and empowerment.

A certificate from U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard read: "Some people sacrifice kindness and generosity to get ahead in business—but Carlota Hufana Ader has demonstrated that embracing these values, inspiring others to do the same, working hard in service to her community, and raising a family is all possible in conjunction with also achieving success in business."

The award comes on the heels of another distinction by the Filipina Women's Network (FWN) which honored Ader as one of the 100 Most Influ-

ential Women of the World. She received FWN's award on August 23, 2016 at the Mactan Shangri-La in Cebu, the Philippines.

By profession, Ader is a medical technologist, a paralegal and paramedical in business, and an instructor in phlebotomy, EKG and IV therapy. She has served as president of La Union Circle of Hawaii, vice president of the Oahu Filipino Community Council, chair of the United Filipino Council of Hawaii's Mrs. Hawaii Filipina Pageant, member and judge of the Mrs. America Pageant Committee, Miss Teen

USA, founder and president of the Grandma Hawaii International, vice president of the

American Business Women Association Leeward Chapter —to name just a few.

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PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

TWO RED LIGHTS

By Sheryll Bonilla

I've driven through a red light twice. I shouldn't have been behind the wheel since I was in no condition to drive. Both happened within months of each other. God had His protective hand on me, keeping other cars away from the intersections.

I stepped out of my office, having intensely concentrated on finishing a legal memo, to take it to my supervising attorney Robert K. Merce. The law firm was suddenly pin-drop quiet, the only sounds coming from the radio on the loudspeaker. President George H.W. Bush announced he was turning Operation Desert Shield into Operation Desert Storm. Everyone was as still as a mannequin. The gravity of the president's message struck so deeply that I floated from my mezzanine office down to

Bob's, past our secretary Karen and paralegal Mona. I collapsed in my chair in front of his desk and began sobbing uncontrollably.

Mona asked, "Why is Sheryll crying?" and Karen whispered back, "Her father is there." Bob sat back in his chair, one leg crossed over the other as he usually did, listening to the president, his bright blue eyes gazing sympathetically at me. The president stopped speaking. We were all enveloped in the shock of war now grimly hanging over the whole office. Trying to comfort me, Bob said, "Sheryll, go home. Don't do anymore work today, just take care of yourself."

Karen and Mona helped me up and led me to my office. Reality ran through my mind: *My father is there; he was deployed at the beginning of October. He wrote to my Mom that he slept with a rifle and gas mask beside him.* The night be-

fore he shipped off, dad took our family to eat dinner at Rex's Steak House, a restaurant meal seldom had, marking the danger of being sent to hostile territory.

My friend Louise, whose marine aviator husband flew reconnaissance over Iraq the summer before, said soberly, "Guy's at work." That was the truth of being in a military family—if global conflict arose, work involved contact with the enemy. I often heard her stories of how she, as an officer's wife, was charged with bringing news of a death to a fellow serviceman's family.

I may never see my father again. I had been offered my officer's commission two days before my father deployed. I thought he would be excited at my good news. Instead he said, probably from Asian filial piety, that in no way would he ever salute me. My mother didn't want to risk losing both of us. In deference to both, I de-

clined the commission.

I turned right to get to the freeway. Just as my car approached the rock wall of the hospital, my arms fell off the steering wheel involuntarily. Only Providence kept me from crashing into the stones ahead. The car instead went straight up and I managed to get home, car and me unhurt.

The other time was when we almost lost our mom. My sister called me at work, weeping and told me mom was just diagnosed with cervical cancer. I started crying. Paul and Craig, fellow attorneys, told me to go to see my mom and not to worry about work. Out of the parking lot I drove through the first traffic when, just yards away at that almost triangular intersection, the next traffic light went red. *My Mom has cancer—she's going to die.* Again the hand of Providence kept all the oncoming traffic stopped at the line as I went through in a trance induced by grief.

My father returned safely

from the first Gulf War. My mother's hysterectomy completely removed the cancer.

I am too young to remember when my father served in Vietnam. My children, like their generation, are too young to remember a time when our country hasn't been engaged in military conflict. They haven't experienced the shock of peacetime broken by a president's sobering declaration of war and the somber national mood that such a grave announcement deserves.

Cancer treatment has advanced enough that the diagnosis, while still cause for serious life changes, is no longer the immediate death knell it once was. Whatever divisions arise in times of peace and well-being, the solemnities of life—whether on a global scale like war or an individual level like a medical diagnosis—should make us remember that we share a common essence of humanity and should strive to maintain the cohesiveness that binds society together.

KAKATALK

Peace With Earth, Goodwill From All

By Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand

The Hawaii Convention Center pulsated with interactions and deliberations by some 10,000 IUCN WCC participants from over 190 countries and territories. Participants came from different perspectives—sciences, civil society organizations governments, indigenous and local communities, businesses and more. Some 500

events were arranged—ceremonies, high level dialogues, exhibits, knowledge cafes, workshops, posters, social events, excursions and members' assembly.

"Everyone is leaving here with a spirit and strong commitment...10,000 are stepping up to the challenge and increasing work to save ecosystems and biodiversity," IUCN Director General Inger Andersen stated at the conclusion of the

10-day gathering.

Goodwill and specific directions to help the earth were aplenty but most were not in the media's spotlight. At a networking and exhibit event, I heard the warm endorsement for volunteer opportunities to help Great Lake Baikal in Russia. The positive words came from a Yale University professor who said that the program to help build the conservation area's trails caters to old and young volunteers alike.

Part of what inspires me is that the power in the room today was not in the elected officials or dignitaries but the individuals who worked everyday in conservation and places of ecological significance and working with the people in their own communities. —U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz at the opening press conference of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the World Conservation Congress (IUCN WCC) held September 1-10, 2016 in Hawaii.....

At a pavilion dialogue event, I listened to the discomfort over a multi-stakeholder landscape approach (to multiple goals including forest biodiversity protection) that Asia Pulp & Paper Company advocated for Indonesia. The voice of reluctance came from a London School of Economics researcher who did not want a repeat of oil palm production project implementation that ended up in more deforestation.

At the IUCN WCC Members' Assembly sessions, I witnessed the meticulous handling of an extended deliberation to settle a long-drawn conflict over the banning of ivory in all domestic markets. I also heard the ready approval of an emergency motion to support peace

and nature in Colombia after the historic August 24th ceasefire agreement between the government and rebel forces.

I saw a crowd of 1,000 local middle and high school students and teachers engage in a design-thinking process for solutions to Hawaii's own conservation and sustainability challenges. They visited the various IUCN WCC Pavilions on biodiversity and business, oceans and islands, forests, waters, special conservation and others.

Waipahu High School senior Shiela Mae Almazan says it was a highlight to meet fellow students from Molokai, Maui and other neighbor islands schools, and learn to listen to

(continued on page 10)

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WHAT'S UP ATTORNEY?



**By Atty. Emmanuel
Samonte Tipon**

The Trump Immigration Act – Let's Start with a Clean Slate

The space below has been left intentionally blank. We respectfully suggest that Congress start with a clean slate in enacting THE TRUMP IMMIGRATION ACT that will serve the national interest and is fair to lawful immigrants. Congress must repeal and replace the entire Act which is a leaky cauldron containing an alphabet soup of laws like AEDPA and IIRIRA, is chock-full of grammatical errors, enmeshed in a bundle of self-contradictions, such as using the term "removal" in one place and "deportation" in another, very harsh on lawful permanent resident aliens who commit petty offenses, and employing big and vague words without defining them like "crime involving moral turpitude" thereby wasting the time of the courts in explaining what they mean often with contradictory results.

ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School where he specialized in Constitutional Law. He has also a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He placed third in the Philippine Bar Examination in 1956. His current practice focuses on immigration law and criminal defense. He writes law books for the world's largest law book publishing company and writes legal articles for newspapers. He has a radio show in Honolulu, Hawaii with his son Noel, senior partner of the Bilecki & Tipon law firm, where they discuss legal and political issues. Office: American Savings Bank Tower, 1001 Bishop Street, Suite 2305, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A. 96813. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.bileckilawgroup.com. He was born in Laoag City, Philippines. He served as a U.S. Immigration Officer. He is co-author with former Judge Artemio S. Tipon of the best-seller "Winning by Knowing Your Election Laws" and co-author of "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed.," an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. Atty. Tipon has personally experienced the entire immigration cycle by entering the United States on a non-immigrant working visa to write law books, adjusting his status to that of a lawful permanent resident, and becoming a naturalized United States citizen.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Public Invited to 32nd Annual Honolulu City Lights Celebration

In what has become a favorite island Christmas tradition, thousands of families will be joining the 32nd annual Honolulu City Lights celebration scheduled for December 3, 2016.

The event kicks off a month-long celebration of family-friendly activities and festive displays at grounds of the Frank F. Fasi Civic Center.

Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell will lead the official tree lighting ceremony at 6 pm, with local celebrity Billy V as emcee and a special performance by the Kamehameha Elementary School Children's Choir. University of Hawaii head football coach Nick Rolovich will be joined by students from Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School to ceremoniously illuminate the city's 55-foot holiday tree at 6:30 pm and trigger the corridor of lights and displays along King and Punchbowl streets.

One of the many highlights of the evening is the Public Workers' Electric Light Parade,

which celebrates its 26th year as part of Honolulu City Lights. A dazzling procession of festooned city vehicles and school marching bands will travel from Chinatown through King Street, led by the dancing "City Lights," the event's crowd-favorite mascot which debuted last year. Shannon Scott and Olena Heu return as parade hosts.

The opening night also includes a free, star-studded holiday concert near the Sky Gate with musical entertainment by Halau Hula Olana, Blayne Asing, Mailani Makainai and Sean Naauao. Themed displays and lights will adorn the grounds surrounding Honolulu Hale and the courtyard will be unveiled, featuring the beautiful city trees and community wreath exhibits.

The public is invited to come early to take advantage of the free parking available in the city's municipal lot, with entry from the left lane of Beretania Street just past Alapai Street.

Food, beverages, and other novelty items will be sold on the grounds throughout the evening. The Friends of Honolulu City Lights will be selling the event's 2016 holiday T-shirt, as well as this year's Christmas ornament, which honors the 75th Pearl Harbor Commemoration. Sales of these collectible items go toward ensuring that Honolulu City Lights remains free to the public.

The opening night festivities, including the tree lighting ceremony, parade, and concert, will be cablecast live on December 3, from 6 pm to 10 pm on Olelo Channel 49.

The event is presented each year by the City and County of Honolulu and the Friends of Honolulu City Lights. Honolulu City Lights will be open daily from 8 am to 11 pm and will run through January 1, 2017, including Christmas and New Year's Day.

Go online to: www.honolulu.gov/csd for more details on the event.



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FEATURE

HIFF WRAP-UP AMIDST A POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

By Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand

This year's Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) started a week before the U.S. presidential election and wrapped up the Honolulu leg a week after. At writing time, a few more films will be screening at the Hilo Palace Theater and Kauai Waimea Theater. Although a political upheaval in the US was not part of Festival planning, this year's films and events offered many lenses for contemplating the changes that such can bring.

Of significance to multi-ethnic communities was the November 5 session, Choke Misrepresentation: Asian Pacific American Images on Screen. It was a panel discussion on seeing and portraying Asian Pacific Americans in films and TV. Six filmmakers and actors with Hawaii ties -- Taylour Chang (moderator), Donne Dawson, Daniel Dae Kim Chris Lee, Christopher Makoto Yogi, and Keo Woolford--packed the hour with reflections, insights, and call for action.

The need for more progress is clear when Asian characters have only one percent of total speaking roles in films and TV shows, a statistic that Kim said is from a USC study. Worries also continue about negative stereotyping, a point made by someone in the audience. Just recently, a public backlash led to the abandonment of a proposed NBC's sitcom, *Mail Order Family*. There are also criticisms about the Disney's movie, *Moana*, that will be showing in theaters on Thanksgiving week. Among others, social media activists pointed out the negative stereotyping of Filipinos/Asians and Polynesians, respectively.

Kim explained that change agents today are figuratively standing on the shoulders of giants who risked careers and worked hard when opportuni-



STUDENT SHOWCASE Filmmakers.

ties were not there at all for Asian Americans. For his part, he turned his success as an actor (e.g. playing Chin Ho Kelly in *Hawaii 5-0*) into an opportunity to have a CBS Studio-based production company named 3AD. He feels that it is by producing and directing that he can create contents to his liking (e.g. more major parts for Asian Americans).

The figurative giants include film producer Chris Lee who, among many others, buzzed about building the creative industry of the islands when it was unheard of and then founded the University of Hawaii Academy of Creative Media in 2002. Lee said that nowadays, one should not feel that they need permission (e.g. from Hollywood) to make films or shows. The state of the arts is such that filmmakers can make and distribute films with more accessible and/or cheaper technologies including the internet.

The discussants left it up to the audience to decide whether the current state of inclusion and diversity normalization in US films and television show is "glass half-empty" or "half-full" (pessimistic or optimistic). Woolford and Yogi appreciated the opportunities they have had to depict characters and contexts with authenticity and honesty. They acknowledged the burden that communities put when they ex-

pect that one film or one character should depict the totality of being Asian, Hawaiian, etc. Dawson cited *Moana* as a film that is criticized for the depiction of its protagonist (e.g. negative stereotype of Polynesians) but also one that can go a long way in telling that the history of the islands began centuries before Captain Cook arrived.

All discussants agreed that more, not less, opportunities and projects will mean more voices and depictions so that no one film or television program will be carrying the burden of portraying an entire race, ethnicity, or community.

To this last point, Made in Hawaii Shorts and Student Showcase represent the emergence of a community of creative talents that are sensitive to the islands' many voices (including the voices from nature).

The 2016 HIFF's Made in Hawaii Shorts featured six short films that were shot entirely in Hawaii but so diverse in their stories. One of the short films, *Holdout*, transports viewers into the world inspired by the true story of Hiroo Onoda, an intelligence officer of the Imperial Japanese Army who straggled for 29 years in the jungles of Lubang island in the Philippines. Another film, *Ho'omau* won the year's HIFF audience award for best short film. The project is epically

ambitious for a short film and interestingly manifested its own message of persistence.

The Student Showcase featured 16 projects that were selected from 162 entries from Hawaii. The students experimented with techniques that were as diverse as the stories they told. Some stood out more than others -- e.g. handcrafted props for 13 Minutes, acting for Remembering Margo, voice over for the bees in From Flowers to Food and others. One should not be surprised if this mix of young and ethnically-diverse filmmakers will find themselves the subjects of documentary films in the distant future, like Isabel Wiemken's *Taking Notes: Advice for Young Musicians* or Samuel Nishimiya's *Raynor*.

Meanwhile, the story about Philippine films at this year's HIFF is one of entrusting "Filipino" stories to some filmmakers who were not specifically looking to tell "Filipino" stories. Fortunately, the stories were in the hands of filmmakers who were confident in what they know and humble in what they didn't. The results were filmmaking approaches that were meant for the Filipino stories that they ended up telling.

Four films were listed as being from the Philippines -- *Singing in Graveyards* by Bradley Liew, *Out Run* by S. Leo Chiang and Johnny

Symons, *Toto* by John Paul Su, and *Apocalypse Child* by Mario Cornejo. *Singing..* earned a nomination for the Halekulani Golden Orchid Award for Best Narrative Feature while the *Out Run* earned one for Best Documentary. The Hawaii Council for the Humanities' Films for Thought selected *Out Run* as one of six films for discussion. UH Manoa History Professor Vina Lanzona served as its Humanities scholar. The film directors, except Cornejo and Symons, were there during film screenings and engaged in post-screening Q&A. *Toto*'s entourage included several of its cast and production team members.

Singing in the Graveyards is about a 68 year old Pepe Madrigal whose role in making a 1970s rock and roll band popular was not really valued. He composed the band's hit songs but recognition and fame went to the celebrity of the band, Joey Smith. For decades, Pepe was alright with his rock and roll gigs and opportunities to impersonate Joey Smith. Pepe set out to write music again but was required to write a love song, a genre that he couldn't do in the past and struggled to do. Malaysian director Liew chose to do *Singing in the Graveyards* after the death of his grandfather. Like many grandchildren, he regretted not minding his grandfather when he was alive. Liew's success in telling this story comes from his decision to craft an organic filming process around the aging Pepe Smith, the Pinoy rock and roll artist of the 1970s who is the inspiration of the plot and who acted as the lead character. The result is a film with long takes and oozingly slow pace. Viewers can have all the time to absorb the details of a Pep's weary life. Some left the theater before the end of the 2.5 hour film but that seemed to be the point of the film. That is, we make outwardly elderly amongst us invisible.

Toto is about a Filipino hotel attendant in the prime of his life and whose determination to get a US visa became the center of his being. His family is from Tacloban and

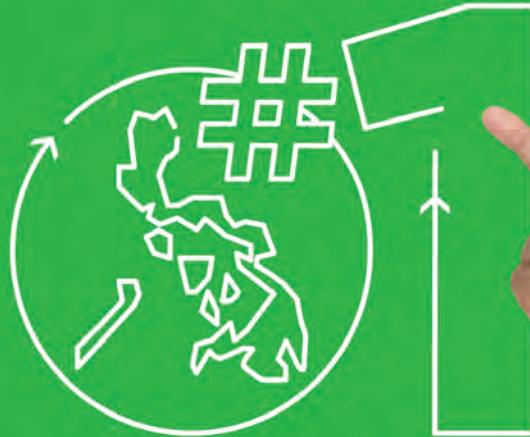
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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

U.S. House Approves Gold Medal for Filipino WWII Veterans

The U.S. House of Representatives has unanimously passed a bill that awards the Congressional Gold Medal to Filipino veterans of World War II.

The Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act (S.1555) now heads to President Barack Obama for his signature. U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono and U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard co-introduced S.1555 last year and worked together toward the bill's final passage. In July, the U.S. Senate gave its unanimously approval of the bill.

"These loyal and courageous soldiers suffered, sacrificed, fought and gave their lives alongside their American counterparts throughout the war," says Gabbard. "Despite their critical role in the Pacific, Filipino World War II veterans have never been recognized by Congress for their service."

Ret. Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, who

chairs the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project, called the bill's passage "a significant seminal period in American history—second only to the liberation of the Philippines and surrender of the Japanese Imperial Forces."

"Now we can tell our veterans with pride in our hearts that this grateful nation has, at last, granted them recognition for the selfless sacrifice they endured in war and restored their dignity and honor in service to their nation," he says.

U.S. Sen. Dean Heller of Nevada, who worked with Hirono for bipartisan passage of the legislation in the Senate, says the Filipino veterans deserve the medal for their sacrifice and service to the U.S. during World War II.

"I am proud to see these brave individuals finally rewarded for their military service," Heller says. "With both House and Senate passage, I look forward to seeing this legislation swiftly signed into law by the president."

KAKATALK (*from page 6, PEACE WITH....*)
 each other, uncover common problems and explore solutions together.

Fellow senior Jennifer Velasco was impressed by the differences of ecosystems in different countries, the uniqueness of their animals and different advocacies. Another senior, Rency Mae Oria, was intrigued by unmanned technologies used in conservation work. Freshman Denise Compollo was surprised at how children in some parts of the world have little or no access to water.

Farrington High School junior Makenzie Galanto was touched by the plight of Dugongs. The migratory marine mammal is listed as vulnerable in IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the Save the Dugong Campaign Centre brought attention to their threatened habitats in Okinawa because of planned US military bases.

"Youth have to be broadminded and pay attention also to these (environmental matters). We can use social media to share information and talk about conservation," Galanto says.

The most consequential goodwill came from Hawaii. It was echoed in many ways that Kauai-based Chipper Wichman and Maui-based Penny Levin tossed around the idea of bringing the quadrennial IUCN WCC to Hawaii while attending the 2008 event in Barcelona, Spain. From the opening protocol to the closing ceremony, Hawaii highlighted ancestral knowledge that is informed by

nature and showcased conservation efforts that are grounded in the connection of indigenous peoples with land and water.

Vicky Tauli-Corpuz, Special Rapporteur to the United Nations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, traveled all the way from Baguio City to dialogue. She and other representatives of indigenous communities acknowledged that many conservation organizations now have better policies on indigenous peoples and she pushed for better implementation.

"Indigenous peoples retain strong spiritual links with the plants, trees and animals on their lands and protecting their lands is a sacred duty. Yet, indigenous peoples may not refer to themselves as conservationists," she says. "Full recognition of indigenous land rights and participation are key enabling conditions for conservation to be sustained. Conservation organizations should make much more use of their leverage vis-à-vis States to advocate for the legal recognition of indigenous peoples' rights at the national level."

The launching of the e-book, "Climate Solutions From Community Forests: Learning from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities" brought further attention to 17 inspiring stories and lessons for this challenging era of climate change and dramatic socioeconomic inequality across the world. One such story is a mangrove reforestation initiative in Northern Samar but that and more are for another Kakatalk column.

NEWS FEATURE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECRETARY YASAY MEETS WITH FILIPINO COMMUNITY

By Carolyn Weygan-Hildebrand

About 140 guests showed up for a community town hall meeting at the Philippine Consulate with Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Perfecto Yasay, Jr. Attendees included elected officials with Filipino ties, Filipino media representatives, and leaders and members of organizations that advocate for business, culture and the arts and other Filipino interests. The audience was made up of Americans, Filipinos and dual citizens (U.S. and Philippine).

Consul Joyleen Santos, the evening's emcee, promptly started at 6:30 pm and billed the event as the Consulate's first "Town Hall Meeting with the Filipino Community in Hawaii." The program had only three parts—the welcome and introduction of the guest of honor by Consul General Gina Jamoralin, brief remarks by Yasay and a question-and-answer forum moderated by radio station KPHI's Allan Alvarez.

There were many questions for Yasay but due to time constraints, questions were limited to accommodate a dozen or so—three on Philippine-U.S. relations by Alvarez, seven via open microphone, and the rest from anonymous handwritten questions submitted by the audience. Yasay responded at length and graciously extended the planned 20 minute question-and-answer session to over an hour.

While there were no opening anthems and invocation that evening, there was warm *salo-salo* (Philippine-style buffet) and ample post-program photo opportunities. The gathering's ambience was like a homecoming for Yasay who was honored with a *maile* lei. His wife Cecile also received numerous leis from well-wishers. There was quite a demand for photos with the Yasays after the forum. Many guests, including some members of the Filipino media, posed with the trademark Duterte fist gesture.

Alvarez set the tone when



Kauai Mayor Bernard Carvalho Jr. (right) and DFA Secretary Perfecto Yasay. Carvalho will reportedly lead the next Hawaii Trade Mission to the Philippines.

he reminded guests that the event was to be a friendly and respectful dialogue. The community's questions were not much different from media-buzzed topics and consequently not new to anyone who follows Philippine events closely. Many of Yasay's responses to the current state of Philippine-U.S. relations, the Philippine-China Sea dispute, the war on drugs, trade and travel, and the persona of President Rodrigo Duterte have already been articulated in prior speeches and press conferences. Surprisingly, no one raised a question about the Marcos burial issue.

Philippine Foreign Policy

For those who sought clarification on Duterte's statement of independence from the U.S. and the implications of a Trump presidency, Yasay invoked the 1987 Philippine Constitution as the prism for Philippine foreign policy. He specifically cited two sections, namely Article II Section 7 which states that the "State shall pursue an independent foreign policy" and Article II Section 2 which states that "the Philippines renounces war as an instrument of national policy, adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the law of the land and adheres to the policy of peace, equality and justice." He stressed that bilateral and multilateral relationships with other countries and converging interests must be

pursued along such lines.

Yasay also invoked the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS or Law of the Seas) for the Philippines' position on the South China Sea maritime dispute. The 1982 UNCLOS specifies that "every state has the right to establish the breadth of its territorial sea up to a limit of not exceeding 12 nautical miles." It provides for sovereign jurisdiction over the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which extends up to "200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured." It also provides for sovereign jurisdiction over continental shelf up to the outer limit of 350 nautical miles "if such is a natural prolongation of a State's land territories."

Yasay asked attendees to keep in mind that unlike territorial seas, the 200 and 350 nautical miles limits are only as a sovereign's jurisdiction and not a sovereign's territory. As such, states do not own the area but have rights and responsibilities that other nations must respect, including those that cover the use and exploration of living (fishing) and non-living resources (oil exploration).

Unfortunately for the Philippines, UNCLOS may be legally binding but not automatically enforceable. Consistent with many media reports, Yasay explained that the Duterte administration has sought common grounds with

China on matters of mutual interest (trade) and pragmatically will address the maritime dispute in the future based on UNCLOS. At the town hall meeting, Yasay asked those at the town hall meeting to view the multi-state dispute over the South China Sea like any other disputed territory in the world where a resolution could take decades and even centuries.

Trade and Travel

On the question regarding potential opportunities for

Hawaii-based businesses, Yasay referred to the annual Hawaii Trade Mission to the Philippines that will be taking place in February 2017. He assured Hawaii organizers and delegates of his support and assistance in linking them with pertinent Philippine government agencies. He also encouraged Hawaii businesses to consider exploring how they can be a bigger part of the Philippines' diversification efforts, such as agricultural development, energy development, public utilities and a stronger ASEAN partnership.

Yasay reiterated that the Philippines' travel policies
(continued on page 13)



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES

BLESSED TO BLESS

By Seneca Moraleda-Puguan

In started writing letters to my one-year old daughter when we found out that we were having her. I tell her my experiences, my thoughts of her, my dreams for her and anything else that I can think of. Although she may not understand them for now, it is my desire that someday, she will learn valuable lessons from them. Here's a letter to tell her about the spirit of Christmas and the importance of giving.

Callie,

Blessed. If there's one word, which I can use to describe you, it's this—you are BLESSED.

Your daddy and I are able to provide you with shelter to protect you from the scorching heat of summer and biting coldness of winter. You are able to eat nutritious food three (and even more) times a day. You have a lot of toys to play with and books to read. And best of all, you have family. You have a mommy to take care of you and a daddy who provides for you. And not only that, you are dearly loved.

Callie, everyday I wake up with so much gratitude in my heart. We may not have everything but we are not lacking. God always provides. For this, I am humbled. Even in the midst of trials and challenges, I can't complain.

Blessed you are indeed,



our beloved. Blessed are we. But you know why you are blessed?

You are blessed so you can be a blessing. You are given so you can give. You are not merely a recipient; you are a conduit of blessings. You live not for your own, but for others. I want you to realize and always remember that you have so much to give—not just material resources, but your time and your talents.

Every single day and everywhere you go, there are needs to fill and problems to solve. Just look at the world around you. So many tummies are aching to be satisfied, people longing to have roofs on their heads and hearts that are in need of compassion and love.

It is my prayer that when you grow up, you will be sensitive to the needs of others. I hope that you will always be willing to share what you have and to give generously to those who are in lack. I long to see you lead a life of selflessness,

compassion and generosity. I trust that you will be a blessing to your generation and to the generations after you. And in everything, I pray that you will have a grateful heart.

It can be tough in a world of greed and an "all about me" attitude. But we know that you can and you will be different. You have in your life the greatest example of one who gave completely, one who laid down His life, the reason why we celebrate the Christmas season—Jesus Christ.

You can give because He gave His life for you. He is the epitome of selflessness, generosity and compassion. He is love. He did not withhold anything but offered everything, even His life, so you my child, His child, can live your life to the full. And just as I told you, we can give because we have first received from Him.

In just a few weeks, we will celebrate Christmas. It's going to be your second Christmas on earth. There will be

parties and you will be lavished with beautiful gifts from your aunts and uncles. As they say, it will be the happiest season of all. But beyond the glamour of the flickering lights and the noise of everyone's laughter as families gather on Christmas day, it is the spirit of love and generosity that makes this beautiful season shine.

It is letting the homeless person know that someone cares about him. It is putting a smile on the face of someone who is going through deep trials and pains. It is satisfying the tummy of a little girl who has nothing to eat. It is spending time with a neighbor who feels alone. It is bringing joy to a less fortunate family by making them realize there are people willing to help. Indeed, it is the

spirit of giving that makes this season the most wonderful time of the year.

Christmas songs are now being played everywhere. One of the best Christmas songs that I love to sing, "My Grown Up Christmas List" by Amy Grant, speaks of what is in my heart:

*No more lives torn apart,
that wars would never start
and time would heal all hearts.
And everyone would have a
friend and right would always
win and love would never end.
This is my grown up Christmas
list.*

This Christmas list seems to be too grand a wish. But I know that it can be done. Love can prevail. Love will prevail.

Callie, it starts with me and you. Truly, we are blessed to bless.

Excited for Christmas,
Mommy Seneca

FEATURE (from page 8, HIFF....)

post-Haiyan scenery was a jarring reminder of why *Toto* was desperate. *Toto*'s social milieu is forgiving and even supportive of his desperate but lie-ridden schemes for as long as the noble purpose is to support and protect loved ones. The excellent acting by the ensemble of actors and actresses plus exact comic timing allowed this film to tell this "Filipino" story with authenticity. The scenes were entertaining to the point that it was easy to forget subtle messages. For example, *Toto*'s American benefactor said not to smile too much nor look too desperate when aiming to reach the US. Director Su, who is Manila-raised and NYU-educated wants this film to inspire viewers to aim high and to never give up in life.

Outrun is a story of an ensemble of real Filipinos with three as main characters—Bemz Benedito, Raymund Alikpala, and Santy Layno. It is a documentary on the 2013 unfurling of Ladlad as a political party in the Philippines for the rights and interests of gays, lesbians, transgenders, transvestites, queer, bisexuals (otherwise labeled here in the US as LGBTs). The story unfolds a nationwide community mobilization that starts from scratch

-- beauty parlors and gay pageants became outreach centers of sort; platform agenda considered political repercussions; campaign funds were short but family and friends were sources of support. Bay Area-based director Chiang explained that they were looking for a story about LGBT politicians. They actually started filming the story of gay politician in Kenya but that fizzled out. They were searching again for stories when they heard about the Philippine elections from a staff member who was a Ladlad party supporter. Chiang and Symon's unfamiliarity with the Philippines worked well for this film because they had to rely on their passion for and mastery at crafting excellent documentaries.

They did a lot of research and listening before filming. They were disciplined in developing the story around 3 main characters and paid attention to elements of good storytelling. It is a "food for thought" for democracy as well.

A conflict in schedule prevented this writer from viewing *Apocalypse Child* but the three films string together something about the "colonial" to the "liberated" in the Filipino psyche.

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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Through the years, the H-1B visa program has become a way for American companies to fill their need for highly skilled workers. Through this program, US companies temporarily employ foreign nationals to work in specialty occupations or those requiring a bachelor's degree or higher.

What happens however if after bringing in an employee into the company, the employer discovers that he is not a good fit or that he/she is not what the company needs? After all the tedious paperwork, does it have any re-

Terminating Employment of H-1B Workers

course?

Any employer planning to terminate an employee on an H-1B visa status must follow not only the employment contract and applicable state and federal laws but also must adhere to regulations regarding H-1B employees. They must undertake a bona fide termination of the employment relationship, otherwise they could end up paying a considerable amount of money in back wages and other penalties.

The bona fide termination of employment involves a three-step process: (1) notifying an employee that his/her employment has been terminated; (2) notifying USCIS of the termination so that the petition could be revoked; (3) providing the worker with the reasonable cost of return transportation to his or her home country.

In one case involving a

Filipino H-1B worker, the US Department of Labor (DOL) said that the employer failed to terminate its employment relationship on a certain date because it continued to market the non-immigrant to its clients. In the said case, the employer never sent an official termination notice to the worker. While it claimed to have written a letter terminating his employment, said letter was not offered in evidence. Moreover, even after the date that the employer claimed to have expressly told the worker that the employment was terminated, the former still continued to arrange for job interviews. Because of this, the first requirement was not fulfilled.

Next, the employer must notify USCIS that the employment relationship has ended. In the said case, it was stated that the applicable date for de-

termining when the employer provided notice to USCIS was not the date the USCIS notified the employer that it had revoked the H-1B petition but the date the employer notified USCIS of its desire to revoke the petition.

Lastly, the employer must pay for the H-1B worker's return trip home. An offer of return transportation is sufficient to fulfill this process.

It is important for employers to realize that failure to follow these steps could mean that they do not end their obligations of paying wages to their H-1B worker. Under the H-1B regulations, the employer must continue to pay wages unless the employer can prove by a preponderance of evidence that a bona fide termination was undertaken.

If the DOL determines that the employer committed a wage violation, it may also

order the employer to pay back wages for the entire term of the LCA supporting the H-1B petition, calculated at the higher of the actual or prevailing wage. The H-1B employee may likewise be entitled to pre- and post-judgment interest on all back wages due.

In the same case, the DOL ordered the employer to pay back wages from February 15, 2010 to October 27, 2010 even if the employer notified the USCIS of the termination of employment in June 2010 and offered a plane ticket home on May 21, 2010. It was only on October 27, 2010 when the employer unequivocally put on notice that he was no longer an employee.

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

NEWS FEATURE (from page 11, FOREIGN AFFAIRS)

have not changed and dismissed statements of new and stricter policies for U.S. citizens. He denied any presidential animosity towards Filipinos in America. When asked to comment on Duterte's statements about Filipinos in America, Yasay in turn asked the audience if Duterte did not have a valid point when he stated that Filipinos in America are not Filipinos anymore but Americans. This writer notes that many Filipinos do choose to become American citizens and now owe allegiance to the U.S.

Deaths, Drug War and Rehabilitation

Yasay asserted the official position of the Duterte administration on extra-judicial killings, the war on drugs and resources for rehabilitation. That is, the Philippine government does not condone unlawful killings and that it is not engaged in extra-judicial killings; the Duterte administration is committed to its war against drugs; the government is working within a current budget allocation that has no

allotment for the need for rehabilitation.

He said that the war on drugs is already choking drug distribution networks and limiting people's access to shabu. He suggested a positive correlation between the war's success and the drug's skyrocketing street market price.

Yasay's wife, Cecile, explained that a task force on the establishment and creation of drug rehabilitation centers needs everyone's help and that more businesses are pledging to help. Based on an assessment of the 700,000 drug users who have surrendered to the government, the task force is estimating that 100,000 or 1 out of every 7 need to be housed in in-house rehabilitation centers, while the remaining 6 should be in community-based rehabilitation programs.

When sought for encouraging words to children in the Philippines who, to no fault of theirs, have become orphans because of drug-related operations, Yasay said that families will be supported to the extent that is provided for by law,

such as benefits for orphans of police who have died in the line of duty. He does not think, however, that there is anything for children of drug dealers.

Duterte Persona

"Great!" was Yasay's response when asked to provide one word that describes Duterte—his former roommate. He offered a more long-winded answer when asked what he could do as a friend to encourage Duterte to limit his curse words. Yasay said that the Philippine President has toned down his cursing recently and assured the audience that Duterte is diplomatic during his meetings with officials when he visits abroad.

Yasay suggested that Duterte curses because it is effective to do so with his constituency.

Yasay and America

Contrary to the suspicions of some that he is an American citizen, Yasay made it clear that he is a Filipino citizen and explained that only Filipino citizens are allowed to hold cabinet positions like his.

Likewise, he also agreed to

this writer's statement that there is no contradiction between his much-publicized thesis that "America has failed the Philippines" and a blogger's claim that "America has not failed Yasay and his family." Yasay explained the historical context of America's failure and also agreed that America has been good to many Filipinos, including himself.

At the conclusion, an attendee assessed that it was a good meeting as all questions were satisfactorily answered. Another attendee concluded that cited statistics were different from what she was made aware of by someone in the Philippines. Following the event, numerous attendees promptly posted photos on social media.

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PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE



ILOKO
By Amado I. Yoro



LDAW TI PANAGYA-MAN ITA. Maudi a Huebes iti Nob i e m b r e . Maysa ti pabo

a simbolo ti panagyaman ken iti sakripisio. Iti panagapit ken panagani kadagiti bungbunga ti mulmulatayo iti daga a nasalibukag,

"BILANGEM DAGITI PARABURNA".

AGSARDENG TAYO. IKIDEM DAGITI MATAM, NO KAYATMO, IPOKUSMO TI MAYSA A NAPINTAS A BANAG WENNO LUGAR WENNO DISSO DAYTA PANNUNOTMO.... KEN U M A N G E S I T I NAUNEG.....KUNATAYO: AGYAMANAK APO.

Wen. Sagut. Parabur. Ben-dision. Nabuslon nga ayat. Aglaplapusanan a panangilala.

Agyamantayo iti balligi..

Dagiti Parabur a Tagipatgen ken Pagyamantayo

Dagiti gunggona..Pamma-dayaw. Ti trabaho. Ti Salun-at. Ti isem ti kaarruba..Ti kablaaw ti pagayam. Pam-malagip ni patpatgen. Panang-tubngar a panangpasayaat ti aramid. Ti pul-oy ti angin nga angsen. Ti danum ken taraon nga ipauneg. Ken agyamantayo pay no dadduma iti pan-nakapaay, ken panagbiddut. Dagitoy ti paakadalan iti nasaysayaat a banag.

Ammuentayo ti grasia, parabur ket sagut ti Nasantuan a Dios kadayo.

Kitaen ita ti aglawlaw. Adda ti nakaparsuaan a buya. Adda dagiti nagduduma a maris. Datayo dagiti maris. Bunga amin ti Kinamanagayat ti Dios. Inikkannatayo ti sirib, salun-at, telento ken pannabalbin nga aggaraw ken agkuti a mangisakad kadagitoy. Sirib ken talento nga agaramid kadagiti banag a naituding para kadayo.

Agyamantayo kadagiti adda kadayo. Saantayo met koma nga isakripisio ti kina-Filipinotayo gapu la ta addatyon iti America.

Agtalinaed koma ti kultura ken tradision a Filipino. "No ti kaputotam ket Filipino, agtali-naed a Filipino"

Saantayo met koma a pa-garupen a perpetotayo. Awan ti perpekto. "Ta isuda amin ket agkurangda iti dayag ti Dios".

Agyamanak mismo ken personal nga ipeksak ti panagyamankyo kadagiti aktibidad a naileppastayo babaen iti panagtittinulong, sinnaray, teamwork, iti spirit of com-muncity service: feeding the homeless, adopt a highway, help "Make America Beautiful", solicitation of donations, clothing, foods, monetary gifts/donations to the flood, typhoon, victims and victims of natural calamities and disasters.

Kadatayo a lider, iti man a gunglo, ituloytayo ti narecta a panagkakabsat ken panagtra-

bahotayo a kas dadaulo. Saan la koma nagan, puera de los buenos, adda kasta a ma-pasamak no dadduma. Ituloytayo a papigsaen ti pakinakem ken riknatayo nga agserbi. Ituloytayo ti dumngeg, agpan-unot, agkararag ken mangipatungpal kadagiti an-nuroten ken rebbengtayo nga aramiden kas nakaisaadantayo.

Ituloytayo ti nasayaat a komunikasion. Napino ken manaknam a sinnarita ken natnalna a panagpuspuso. Agtali-naed koma ti respeto, kortesia ken pinnarbeng iti tunggal maysa kadayo.

Saantayo koma met a mapnek iti balligi a nagundtayo ita. Ituloytayo ti mang-

bukel ti maysa a banag a nabayagen nga inar-arapaaptayo a mabukel a mabalin a makatulong a mangpasayaat ti biagtayo mismo iti iti padatayo . Pledging. Giving. Follow through. Sharing. Stewardship ken Voluntarism.

Ta adda nakaibaonantayo amin nga aramiden. Iti nasimbeng a panagtrabaho ken panagtutunos. We each have something of value to Give and Contribute – and perform.

Dumgngegtayo. Saan a mangbukel a dagus iti konklusion.

No ania dagiti ibilangtayo a sagut ken kinagusat, dagita met la ti intayo ipateg ken pagyamanan. No ania dagiti gunggonatayo, agyamantayo, MANGTEDTAYO MET. ngem nangnangruna nga agyaman ken bigbigentayo ti Kina-managparabur ni Apo Dios.

Madaydayaw ti Naganna

PHILIPPINE NEWS



Balikbayan Boxes Still Not Exempt from Taxes

by Christina Mendez
Saturday, Nov. 26, 2016

MANILA, Philippines - Filipino families who are waiting for balikbayan boxes from their loved ones abroad will not be able to enjoy the higher tax exemption of P150,000 this Christmas season since the Bureau of Customs failed to finish the implementing rules and regulations (IRR).

Six months since the Customs Modernization Law (CMTA) was amended, Customs spokesman Col. Niel Anthony Estrella admitted the agency has yet to issue the IRR, saying they are still trying to consolidate inputs from the public.

"The committee handling

the IRR is planning to finish it by the end of the year, but they need another month ...but it seems they can't make it, with all the holidays and all other things needed to be done for this coming season, we're safe to say that by early next year, we're about to finalize the IRR," he said.

In the absence of the implementing rules, including the provision to increase the tax-exempt ceiling for balikbayan boxes from P10,000 to P150,000, Estrella said the old law would still prevail during this Christmas season.

The Customs' policy contradicts the position of some of the principal authors of the CMTA.

Sen. Ralph Recto reiterated the absence of the IRR should

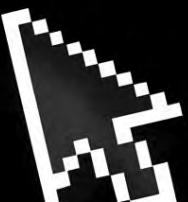
(continued on page 15)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

PNP: 4,605 Dead in Drug War

by Jaime Laude
Saturday, Nov. 26, 2016

MANILA, Philippines - Over 4,000 and still counting.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) reported yesterday that the government's anti-drug war "Oplan Double Barrel" has resulted in the killing of 1,959 suspected drug pushers and addicts in police operations nationwide while 2,646 others were victims of summary execution as of Nov. 23, bringing the total to 4,605 dead since President Duterte took office in July.

Bodies continue to pile up in the government's brutal war against illegal drugs.

Senior Supt. Dionardo Carlos, PNP spokesman, citing an updated report, said that aside from those neutralized in legitimate police operations and summary executions or "salvaging," some 37,449 drug suspects were also arrested during the 36,600 police anti-narcotics operations from July 1 until yesterday.

Under the PNP's Oplan Tokhang, policemen have also visited 4,091,542 houses to discourage residents from getting involved in illegal drugs.

Oplan Tokhang had also resulted in the surrender of 807,659 drug dependents and pushers around the country.

Oplan Tokhang is an anti-narcotics strategy aimed at addressing the country's drug menace, from the higher echelon of drug rings down to street level illegal operations.

The PNP also reported yesterday, that from July 1 to Nov. 23, there were 2,646 deaths in the 3,370 different criminal activities that involved 3,658 victims.

The rise of these unexplained deaths has been attributed to the continuing police crackdown on illegal drugs.

There were reports that rogue cops involved in the illegal drug trade were themselves the brains behind these summary executions to cover their tracks.

Critics also claimed that the PNP's drug war has given policemen the green light to skirt the law

in dealing with drug offenders and those with alleged involvement in other crimes.

The PNP categorized this killing spree launched by unidentified suspects as Death Under Investigation (DUI).

Carlos said 264 suspects have been arrested out of the 724 investigations involving 3,658 victims of 3,370 incidents.

Suggestions, please

After asking for a six-month extension of the government's war against illegal drugs, President Duterte called on the military and police to provide suggestions on how to eradicate the drug problem within that timeframe.

"We are in narco-politics. It is here (since) about three elections ago. It reached mayors, governors, barangay captains, policemen, thousands of them. So, (since) they are in government, we are in narco-politics. How do we solve it, we have to study it," Duterte said during a press conference after visiting wounded soldiers yesterday at the Camp Navarro General Hospital in Zamboanga City.

Since his list of government officials involved in drug trafficking has grown thick after several verifications, Duterte said he needed some suggestions from the military and the police.

"You (soldiers) are the guys that would maintain the integrity of the Republic of the Philippines, what do you intend to do? What can you suggest that we do? It (drug problem) cannot last way beyond my term," the President added.

Duterte promised to end the country's illegal drug problems in six months from June 30, the day he stepped into office.

However, even before the period is to end in December, Duterte asked for an extension of another

(from page 14, BALIKBAYAN...)

not prevent the government from complying with the new law.

Recto said balikbayan boxes should be covered by the P150,000 duty- and tax-free tax ceiling for the shipments from overseas Filipino workers pursuant to the CMTA.

six months citing the enormity of the problem, including the more than 700,000 people who surrendered nationwide and admitting to either using or pushing shabu.

He said no one anticipated that the problem was that huge, pointing out that the number far exceeds what could be accommodated by all existing drug rehabilitation centers in the country.

Duterte noted that his administration could still do a "decent" job in solving the drug menace with the participation of the military and police.

He reiterated his denial of any involvement in extrajudicial killings or those that appeared to be done by vigilante groups, saying these were the works of the drug syndicates themselves as they purged their ranks.

"A month before I became president, they (drug syndicates) were cleansing already, purging to protect everybody (in their trade)," Duterte said.

He suggested that the illegal drug operators are passing the blame to his government as he is resolute in his campaign to "destroy the apparatus" of the trade.

PNP problems

PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa has called on Negros Island Region policemen to help him solve the problems of scalawags and other issues besetting the police organization.

Dela Rosa noted that Negros is among the regions in the country with serious illegal drug problems.

"Be good out there. Help us, instead of adding to the problem," Dela Rosa said in an interview with Bombo Radyo Bacolod.

Nine police officials and five other police officers were linked to illegal drugs and have been relieved from the regional office and are now assigned in Mindanao and

To expedite things, Recto said the Bureau of Customs could come up with its own order covering the particular section of the CMTA dealing with higher balikbayan box values.

Recto made the call in view of

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Luzon.

Dela Rosa said he hopes that Negrenses will continue to extend their all-out support to the PNP.

"We are doing our best to serve and protect you," he said. (www.philstar.com)

the expected increase in the number of overseas Filipinos coming home for Christmas.

"This should be seen as a pro-OFW move, part of the traditional red carpet treatment given to OFWs during the holidays," he said. (www.philstar.com)



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The Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls, Inc. (BCWW) is a non-profit community based healthcare organization established by the Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii (PMAH) in 1997. The Filipino word Bayanihan means helping one another, deriving its literal context from the Filipinos' long standing tradition of doing community work together. The process of pulling together and helping someone in need is all in the spirit of Bayanihan. In our state, it translates to the spirit of Aloha.

The Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls was founded in response to the need to provide much needed free medical services to those who have no medical coverage in the State of Hawaii. Under this mission, everyone, from indigent locals, the homeless, immigrants, to anyone who cannot afford traditional medical coverage are recipients of the Bayanihan Clinic's free medical and dental services. Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls was bestowed 501 (c) (3) privileges as a nonprofit organization in April 1999 and is allowed to accept tax-deductible donations.

The BCWW has seen a total of 21,000 recipients since 1997 and currently sees an average of 100 patients per month. It has been holding community health fairs in Honolulu and other islands of Hawaii. It also assists in medical missions outside of Hawaii and helps qualified patients with critical medical cases as the need arises. BCWW is a continuing collaborative endeavor with the Hawaii State Department of Health's Lanakila Easy Access Project (LEAP), Hawaii State Department of Health.