

HAWAII



# FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ MAY 4, 2019 ◆

## FILIPINO FIESTA TIME! CELEBRATE CULTURE AND JOIN THE FUN! 4

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STORY  
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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

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## EDITORIALS

# Continue Supporting Filipino Culture; Attend the Annual Filipino Fiesta



The world recently watched in shock and sadness as the Notre Dame Cathedral in France caught fire. It was heart-wrenching to see the over 850 year-old church, one of the first Gothic-style buildings from the Middle Ages that took 200 years to build, perish in flames. Fortunately, the structural integrity of the Cathedral wasn't compromised in the fire.

Besides its architectural grandeur, religious significance mostly to Catholics (it's a Catholic church co-built by both French Kings and the Vatican), the Notre Dame Cathedral is so endearing to the French people because of its history and culture.

Preserving this history and culture is so important to the French that already billions of dollars have been pledged (mostly by three French billionaire families) toward rebuilding the cathedral.

## Filipino Fiesta

At the heart of the Filipino Fiesta is also a strong desire to preserve culture and identity. In the course of a lifetime, individuals develop multiple self-identities – identity based on profession, identity based on economic class, even superficial identity based on material possession. In a way, these new personal identities erode at “inherited” identities such as religious or ethnic ones people are born into.

In cases where individuals relocate to new communities where their inherited culture is no longer the dominant culture (e.g. when Filipinos leave their mother country the Philippines) – the possibility of this erosion is even greater as they assimilate to a new dominant culture they've adopted from which yet another identity forms. Our new label, the hyphenated: Filipino-American.

Slowing down this erosion of ethnic identity takes effort particularly among younger generations who find themselves more removed from their parents' cultural heritage.

Events such as the Filipino Fiesta serves a purpose of reconnecting Filipinos to their roots before it is lost entirely or watered down. This is a reason why Filipino parents bring their children to the fiesta. This is why organizers of the fiesta work ardently to present it each year.

Filipino food, Filipino song and dance, booths that highlight Filipino culture and history, or just hearing Tagalog or any other Filipino dialect – which can be fully enjoyed at the Filipino fiesta – all play a part in cultivating culture and ethnic identity.

## Role of culture in a modern world

Why is this of value in modern society? Some believe knowing who we are and where we came from give us a sense of being anchored and foundationally planted in a rapid world with fleeting values, fleeting impersonal relationships, and fleeting places of residence that can often leave us feeling lost.

Because the modern world pulls us in so many different directions, it could be one explanation why people seek out the familiar, the old, something like our own heritage with deep roots. We then do what we can to cherish and preserve our inherited culture, almost instinctually. On a grand scale, this is recently exemplified in the French people's overwhelming commitment to rebuild the Notre Dame Cathedral. Locally, a similar motivation is behind why Hawaii's Filipino community needs its annual Filipino Fiesta.

This is the 27th year for the Filipino Fiesta and once again it

## FROM THE PUBLISHER



here is a reason why the word fiesta is known all around the world. It's one of those rare words that needs no translation, perhaps because it conjures up feelings of the best and lighter side of life and humanity -- laughter and joy. The great author Ernest Hemingway said, "That every day should be a fiesta seemed to me a wonderful discovery."

For our cover story this issue, associate editor Edwin Quinabo writes about the 27th Annual Fiesta and 7th Flores de Mayo presented by the FilCom Center which will be on Saturday, May 4, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Kaka'ako Gateway Parks. Organizers promise this year's Fiesta will be once again a great family event to learn about Filipino culture, partake in delicious authentic Filipino food, and enjoy riveting ethnic song and dance representing various regions of the Philippines. In the article, get a rundown of the day's Program Schedule, who will be performing, who are the multiple vendors from business to cultural booths to participants of the Community Health Fair, and much more. Get feedback from past fiesta-goers who share why they keep attending this annual event, the largest Filipino event of the year. If you haven't already been to the Filipino Fiesta, I encourage you to see what the buzz has been all about. It's as good or better than what people are saying about it.

Also in this issue, we have an article by Wilma Gonzales Buenaobra, a retiree from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and professor at George Washington University, who writes about the unhealthy effects technological advancements and cyber communication are having in society. Most damaging, to Buenaobra, is the increasing superficial ways we communicate with each other today.

HFC columnist Atty. Reuben Seguritan contributes a very important article “Passing A Bad Check Can Lead to Deportation.” His headline is just one example of a crime that could lead to deportation of an alien living in this country. The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) states that an alien convicted of two or more crimes that involve “moral turpitude” is removable from the United States. The “bad check” example could be perceived as not a serious crime. But the overarching point is that aliens have worked hard and long to get into the country and await becoming citizens. The last thing they'd want is to face deportation for any “perceived” or “unperceived” seriousness of any crime.

Lastly, be sure to read the latest in our news sections, including several articles on what passed and what has been deferred in this year's State Legislature. Among them is an article on two bills that passed to help prevent youth suicides. Not many people know just how prevalent suicides are in our state. The Prevent Suicide Hawaii Taskforce 2018 report shows suicide was the number one cause of fatal injuries of people ages 15-44 in Hawaii, and the number one cause of fatal injuries among all Hawaii residents.

I'd like to thank all our readers, supporters, and advertisers for your continued support. Hope to see you at the Filipino Fiesta. Until next time, warmest Aloha and Mabuhay!

*Chona A. Montesines-Sonido*

is being presented by the FilCom Center.

Join the fun. Bring along family and friends. Support the community and the FilCom Center. A big mahalo once again goes to the FilCom Center, Filipino organizations, businesses and sponsors who continue to make this event something we can all be proud of.

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## EDITORIALS

# AG Barr Misled Public in His Summary; Mueller Report Lays Out Evidence of Obstruction

**T**he long-awaited Robert Mueller's report was finally released in redacted form and the special counsel's findings is far from "total exoneration" as President Donald Trump had earlier proclaimed. Nor has the Mueller report establish as what Atty. Gen. William Barr earlier concluded that no obstruction of justice existed.

Atty. Barr's four-page summary of a two-year investigation – that Barr completed only days after Mueller submitted it – was grossly misleading and a false characterization of the overall content of the report, the public is now finding. The initial four-page summary was so contemptuous of the evidence presented in Mueller's report and revealing of Barr's partisan stripes that his role as the nation's chief law enforcement officer should be abdicated.

The Mueller report is damning and shows the president engaged in "multiple acts" that could have exerted influence on investigators, but that his actions were "mostly unsuccessful" because his subordinates refused to carry out his orders.

The president ordered close aids and associates to undermine investigators. Trump instructed then White House counsel Don McGahn to pursue the firing of Mueller but McGahn threatened to quit rather than follow through.

Trump also encouraged his former campaign manager Corey Lewandowski to carry a message to then Attorney General Jeff Sessions telling him to limit the jurisdiction of the special counsel.

Trump's legal team knew that former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen provided false testimony to Congress about Trump Tower Moscow project. Trump's legal team advised Cohen to keep his statements to Congress "short and tight, not elaborate, stay on message, and not contradict the President." (But there was no evidence found that Trump

directed his legal team.)

The federal crime of obstruction of justice applies to "whoever corruptly, or by threats or force, or by any threatening letter or communication influences, obstructs, or impedes or endeavors to influence, obstruct, or impede the due and proper administration of law."

The Mueller report outlined 10 potential instances of obstruction of justice. AG Barr says obstruction charges are not justified in the report. But the report suggests that this determination of criminal obstruction of justice is left open for Congress to decide.

Jessica Levinson, law professor at Loyola Law School, makes an astute commentary, "If we were talking about Mr. Trump, not President Trump, we'd be talking about an indictment for obstruction of justice. Today we know that Attorney General Barr put a highly positive (for Trump) gloss on the report. Today we know that Mueller found substantial wrongdoing that would plague, and perhaps end, any other presidency in American history. Today we know that perhaps the difference between a suggestion that Trump be prosecuted for obstruction of justice and a suggestion that he not be was 1) Mueller's inability to sit down and speak with Trump without subpoenaing him and Mueller's decision not to subpoena Trump, and 2) actions by Trump's staffers that may have protected the president from legal liability."

## To Impeach or not Impeach

The Democrat-controlled House must now balance between 1) following through on its Constitutional responsibility of oversight and pursue whether sufficient obstruction of justice evidence exists to pursue impeachment; or 2) forego impeachment proceedings and allow the findings of the Mueller report to play out in public opinion in the 2020 elections.

As a matter of principle, the U.S. House is more than justified by the evidence pre-

sented to seek impeachment.

But for compelling political reasons – that impeachment would fail in the GOP-controlled U.S. Senate; and that pursuing impeachment could further divide the country – Democrats could legitimately forgo ramping up further investigations to impeachment status.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi stated before the release of the report that impeachment was not worth it. Now that Mueller's findings has been released, an overwhelming public outcry (which seems to be building) to pursue impeachment, could change Democrat leaderships' minds.

Senator Elizabeth Warren has already called on the impeachment of the president. Others could follow suit within the coming weeks. She said, "To ignore a President's repeated efforts to obstruct an investigation into his own disloyal behavior would inflict great and lasting damage on this country, and it would suggest that both the current and future Presidents would be free to abuse their power in similar ways."

Rep. Adam Schiff, House Intelligence Committee Chair, said "in every way, this is more significant than Watergate." But he adds that House Democrats will take the "political environment" into consideration when deciding whether to undertake impeachment."

## In a more bipartisan time

It's arguable that in any other time the Mueller findings would have been enough for impeachment to prevail. But these are different times politically (far different from the days of Watergate). Bipartisan today is practically non-existent on most issues and matters of consequence; and the GOP has already allowed the President to get away with far more than any president in history could.

Some Democrats say the Democratic Party's leadership is too soft and wishy-washy – which is a legitimate assessment. On one hand, they want to pursue further investigations into other matters not covered by Mueller, e.g. to look into Trump's taxes. Then, on the other hand, leadership is unwilling to seriously commit to impeachment as a course of action. What more must it take for impeachment?

If the tables were turned, it's likely that Republicans

would be far more resolute.

What's not being talked about in the calculation to impeach or not, is that Democrats are really uncertain how impeachment would affect that party's chances of winning in 2020. If they were truly convinced that enough Americans favored it, the wheels for impeachment would be spinning.

But there is also the possibility that they're waiting for greater consensus to come. Barr's misleading summary certainly didn't help toward this cause.

Waiting for popular consensus could be politically practical (arguably even a prudent, wise strategy). But doing nothing could hurt Democrats running for president especially in light of the damaging evidence provided in the Mueller report. Weak leadership does not win elections, Pelosi should know this. Democrats should know this.

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## COVER STORY

# FilCom Center Presents its 27th Annual Filipino Fiesta and 7th Flores De Mayo

By Edwin Quinabo



*et ready for a day of sunshine, smiles and culture. Spring is the season known for bounteous fiestas in the Philippines; and Hawaii's Filipino community has carried over this jubilant tradition for all to enjoy locally.*

*The FilCom Center is presenting its 27th Annual Filipino Fiesta and 7th Flores De Mayo, the largest Filipino event in the state each year, and one of the largest Filipino fiestas in the U.S.*

*This year's Fiesta will be held on May 4, Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Kaka'ako Gateway Parks. It's the second year for the Fiesta to be held at its new location in Kaka'ako Gateway Parks.*

*Keeping with its popular format that draws over 10,000 attendees, the Fiesta once again will have authentic Filipino food, riveting ethnic and multi-genre entertainment, cultural booths showcasing indigenous crafts, art, and history, business vendors, children's games, non-profit advocacy, and a community health fair.*

*There will also be a drawing to win round-trip tickets to Manila, Philippines, courtesy of Philippine Airlines; and a drawing to win round-trip tickets to Las Vegas, Nevada, courtesy of Everlasting Travels.*

Oahu Filipino Community Council (OFCC) is one of over 100 Filipino community organizations and businesses involved in the event. OFCC President Ray Sebastian said, "as the biggest gathering of Filipinos in Hawaii, the Filipino Fiesta is a relevant fixture in the calendar of significant events in the state because it is the one time that all that is good about Filipinos is showcased in one venue within a day. From food and folks, talents and trinkets, music and dance – the Filipino Fiesta is our statement of how important the Filipinos are in Hawaii."

Sebastian moved to Hawaii in December 2014 and has gone to every Fiesta

since then, with one exception in 2017. He invites the public to visit OFCC and other cultural booths of various organization.

Learn about the Filipino martial arts escrima from Bandalan Doce Pares Hawaii.

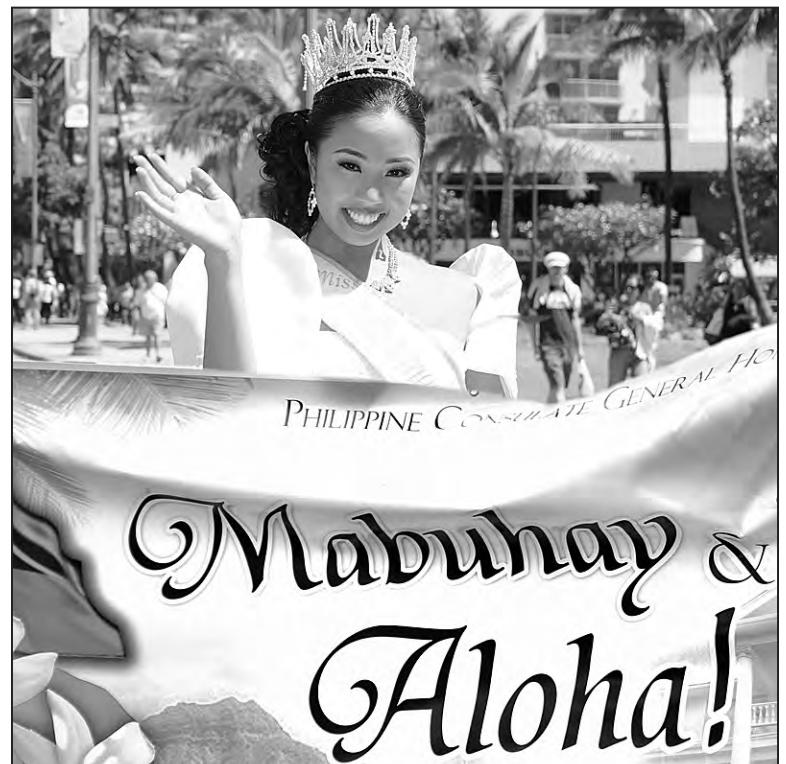
Visit the Timpuyog Organization to learn about the Ilokano language and culture.

Dean Domingo, Instructor in the Ilokano Language & Literature Program at UH-Manoa, said Timpuyog is a student organization affiliated with the Ilokano program that participates in the Fiesta every year to promote the Ilokano language and culture.

"This year we plan to

have various activities under the Ilocos Region tent. Attendees can learn about Timpuyog and the Ilokano Program; pinpoint their hometown on an Ilocos map; learn about the region: like what major crops grow in the region, notable people that come from the region; play a planting rice game; and take photos in our photo booth," said Domingo.

Another fixture at the annual Fiesta is the Filipino-American Historical Society of Hawaii (FAHSOH). Deanna Espinas, FAHSOH Secretary, said, "We are presenting our exhibits and displaying books at the Fiesta to share with the community our Filipino heritage and to promote appreciation of the



Filipino American experience."

**CULTURAL BOOTHS.** Bandalan Doce Pares Hawaii, UPAAH, BIBAK Hawaii, Filipino-American Historical Society of Hawaii, Timpuyog Org-UH Manoa Ilokano Program, Cebuano Association of Hawaii, Inc., Alpha Phi Omega Alumni Association of Hawaii, Dabawenos Community Foundation, and Balaan Catalina Society, Inc.

Cherry Vic Reganit, a business owner from Waipahu, has gone to multiple fiestas and even had a booth selling products from the Philippines like parols (Christmas lanterns), ornaments, and displayed Filipino clothing like ternos and barong tagalogs.

She said, "we have to celebrate with a Filipino Fiesta for our children, for them to see and learn about their culture and heritage. The Fiesta has it all, our ethnic food, songs, dances and art."

Reganit says she goes to the Fiesta for all the Filipino food. "Vendors there have some authentic Filipino food that are not regularly served at Filipino restaurants."

Past Fiesta favorites bound to make a comeback are lumpia, pancit, lechon, pork guisantes, pork adobo,

barbecue pork, and various desserts from halo-halo (shaved ice, sweet beans, fruit, and ube ice cream) to bibingka and cassava cake.

Culinary historians describe Filipino food as a mix of indigenous, Spanish, and Chinese influences.

**FOOD VENDORS.** Some of this year's food vendors are San Nicolas Chicharon & Sausage, Ramar Foods International, Dick's Lechon Corp. and Cools in Catering by Sinublan. Concession vendors are Island's Finest Shave Ice and Island Brew, LLC.

Chef Reynaldo Ramiro of Cools in Catering by Sinublan, or better known as Sinublan, says it will be the first time for his company to be a food vendor at the Fiesta. He has prepared a special menu for the event to include: igado, dinaraan, chicken afritada, beef Caldereta, adobo, pinakbet, sautéed mungo beans, shanghai lumpia, laing, bicol express, and a few others.

Cools in Catering by Sinublan is an exclusive caterer for the FilCom Center, Inc., Mililani Memorial Park & Mortuary, and does off-site catering for special events.

(continue on page 5)

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## COVER STORY

(from page 4)

Mililani resident Christopher Kalani Guillermo has attended four Fiestas. "It was the talk of town for a while back when I first started going. I've heard about the great food and that there are lots of things to buy from the Philippines. So I decided to go and have been having fun each time."

"I enjoy watching celebrities from the Philippines. What I like most is the es-crima (Filipino martial art) demonstration and exhibition. I got a chance to hold and wiggle the sword."

A highlight of the Fiesta is the Philippine folk dances by regions: Ilokano, Visayan, Tagalog, and Igorot. Fiesta-goers who see these folk performances for a first time talk about how proud they are to have culture like this; and some describe how they've never knew such thing existed.

Fiesta organizers also schedule mix genre entertainment to appeal to the multi-generational and diverse audiences. Besides Filipino and ethnic performances, other genres in the past have included Broadway tunes, hip-hop dancers, high school bands, brass bands, jazz, theater-drama performances, and rock.

**PERFORMERS.** Slated entertainment for this year's Fiesta include: Merge Spiral Band, Arceli Acosta, Pike Velasco, Misty Kelai, BIBAK, Community Reigning Queens, Kenjie Mercado, Bandalan Doce Pares, San Nicolas National High School Ensemble, Jordan Seguin, McKinley High School Cultural Group, Mark Calizo, BYU Filipino Club, Lilibeth Palafox Montenegro, Young Once, Lauren Cabrera (Miss Philippines Hawaii), Joel Tolentino, Rose Pedronan Dancers, Dabawenyos of Hawaii, HK Sisters, Camille Yano (Miss Asia Hawaii and partner), Dynamic Trio, Kristianlei and Miguel Cadoy, Cebuano Association of Hawaii, Dabawenyos Community Foundation, Balaan Catalina

**"We have to celebrate with a Filipino Fiesta for our children, for them to see and learn about their culture and heritage. The Fiesta has it all, our ethnic food, songs, dances and art."**

— CHERRY VIC REGANIT,  
*Fiesta-goer and past vendor*

Society, and Bob'sKey. (See Program Schedule sidebar for performance times.)

Governor David Ige and Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell will give welcome remarks.

Like Guillermo, Pearl City resident and caregiver consultant Baybee Hufana-Ablan enjoys watching performers from the Philippines, "especially the actors and actresses who are members of television TV dramas," she says.

This year Philippine TV Star Kenjie Mercado will make an appearance at the Fiesta.

Also from the Philippines will be the HK Sisters who competed in Asia's Got Talent.

Ablan believes a Fiesta is important to remind our community "of their culture and to reminisce the places where they originated in the Philippines. It's also a learning experience for local Filipinos to know about our culture and heritage, something that we can be proud of to be Filipinos."

Ablan says she has supported other ethnic events as well such as those presented by Japanese, Koreans and others. "I enjoy celebrating the different ethnic groups of Hawaii, and trying all their unique dishes."

The Fiesta brings people from all over the island. Waianae resident Lambert Cachola have attended two fiestas. "I only went twice because I have to drive far and sometimes it's tiring."

"But it is worth the drive. Wow. I was impressed to see all the Philippine culture. I've never been to the Phil-

ippines. So I imagine the tastes and performances at the Fiesta are kind of like what you would find in the Philippines," said Cachola.

Like most fiesta-goers, Cachola have gone with family and friends. "It's a great family event. It also builds community camaraderie. We have to let our kids know we have these things like a fiesta that showcases our culture.

"And the food is like homemade cooking, different from some Filipino restaurants. Can't miss it," said Cachola.

**Community-building**

The Fiesta from its inception has also had as a goal to build the local Filipino community. Essential to that aim is to support Filipino businesses on the islands and the non-profits and government agencies that serve our communities.

**Businesses, Non-profits, Government.** This year's Fiesta participants are Valley of the Temples, Estherbrook, Inc. (Salad Master), AARP Hawaii, Avida Land Corporation, Honolulu Army Recruiting Company, Lean 2 Financial, LBC, TFC-Hawaii, Renato and Maria Etrata Foundation, John Gephart, Atlas Shippers International, Legacy of Life Hawaii, Hawaii Filipino Lawyers Association, City & County, Storm Water Quality Branch, Woodmen of the World, Philippine Consulate General.

**Community Health Fair.** The Fiesta once again will also hold a simultaneous Community Health Fair. This year's participants are

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE \***

SEGMENT/PERFORMANCE	PERFORMER	STATUS/DESCRIPTION
Part 1: 9:00 am - 10:00 am- Overture	Voice Over Merge Spiral Band	
Part 2: 10:00 am- 10:30 am- Filcom Hour	Emcee - Amelia Casamina Cabatu	
Invocation	Rev. Arnel Soriano	
Star-Spangled Banner	Arceli Acosta	
Lupang Hinirang	Pike Velasco	
Hawaii Pono'i	Misty Kelai	
Welcome	Jesse Souki, Board Member	
Remarks	Edmund Aczon, Chairman, Board	
Hermano Mayor/ Greetings	Governor David Ige	
Part 3: 10:30 am -12:00 pm- The Sounds of Luzon	Emcees: Edith and Roland Pascua BIBAK	
Am-mong: A gathering of peace		
"Panagbenga" Parade of Flowers	Community Reigning Queens	Ladies promenade carrying flowers in celebration of the Flower festival of Baguio City
First Drawing of Prizes & Introductions of Sponsors	Maggie Domingo-Chair	
Part 4: 12:00 - 1:00 pm - The Color of the Tagalogs	Emcee: Glenn Sagayadoro Kenjie Mercado- Philippine TV Star	
Harana- Serenade	Beauty Queens	
Sunduan		Debutantes parade around town escorted by young men carrying parasols for their ladies.
Filipino Martial Arts Exhibition	Bandalan Doce Pares	
Part 5: 1:00 - 2:00 pm- Kabataan Youth Festival	Emcee: Amelia Casamina Cabatu Mayor Kirk Caldwell San Nicolas National High School Ensemble	
Greetings	San Nicolas National High School Ensemble	
Concert	Jordan Seguin McKinley High School Cultural Group	
Ukelele	Mark Calizo BYU Filipino Club	
Philippine songs and dances		
Song		
Filipino cultural presentation		
Part 6: 2:00 pm -2:45 pm- At Nayong Pilipino	Emcee: Emmie Anderson Lilibeth Palafox Montenegro	
Ilocano singer from Ilocos	Young Once Lauren Cabrera, Ms. Philippines Hawaii	
Bulaklakan	Joel Tolentino, Hawaii's Prince of Ilocano songs	
Song		
Part 7: 2:45 pm -3:15 pm- Halinhinan-Alteration	Emcee: Allan Alvarez	
Mindanao and other Ethnic groups		
Dayang Dayang	Rose Pedronan Dancers Dabawenyos of Hawaii	
Manuvu Dance		
Part 8: 3:15 pm -4:00 pm- Ang Galing ng Pinoy	Emcee: Allan Alvarez	
Songs	HK Sisters	HK Sisters competed in Asia's Got Talent & WCOPA Winner
Salsa		
OPM Allegiance Excerpt	Camille Yano, Ms. Asia Hawaii and partner Dynamic Trio Kristianlei & Miguel Cadoy	Excerpt from the musical
Drawing of Special Prizes Recognitions	Maggie Domingo- Chair	
Part 9: 4:00 pm- 5:00 pm- Fun in the Visayan Isles	Introduction by Firmo Dayao Merge Spiral Band	
Ati-Atihan Festival	Cultural Performers of Cebuano Association of Hawaii and the "Deboto sa Sugbu" Band	
I Love Cebu	Dabawenyos Community Foundation Balaan Catalina Society	
Song & Dance "Pasayawa Ko Day" (Let me dance with you)		
Carinosa		
Song		
Kuratsa		
Matud Nila		
Sinulog Festival		
Hala Bira		
Final drawing of Special Prizes Recognitions	2 R/T to Philippines from PAL Maggie Domingo- Chair	Presented by Sol Solleza, PAL Regional Director
ENCORE!	Kenjie Mercado - Philippine TV Star	

\*Program line up may change without prior notice

(continue on page 14)

## OP-ED



**By Melissa Martin, Ph.D.**

**H**ow do you stay calm in the mist of a trigger? It's usually the small annoyances that push our buttons, raise our cortisol, and flood our bodies with adrenaline. I try not to sweat the small stuff—but I am human just like you. And sometimes I allow my triggers to irritate me.

Situation. The Friday before Easter I stopped to pick up some outside items for the yard. Not smart. The store was buzzing and busy with holiday shoppers. So I grabbed my things and headed towards the checkout line in the Lawn and Garden Department. And there stood one of my triggers. A customer with a cart overflowing with food from the Grocery Department. And half of her stuff was candy. My perception: She is being rude and needed to checkout in the grocery section. And the manager needed to charge her double for sneaking into the Lawn and Garden Department checkout line. And shun, spurn, and shame her.

But I wanted to pass the stay calm test. So I checked

## Passing the Stay Calm Test

my cell phone messages while the customer (a loud lady) chatted to the cashier. Then I scanned the room. And spotted a new-fangled grill that looked like a miniature spaceship. Glancing at the myriad bags of seeds, I wondered about the people that feed our feathered friends. And the customer chatted on and on. Glancing at the ceiling, I viewed the security camera and waved. And the loud lady chatted on and on.

Wouldn't you know it? A price check on her 6-pack of pop. The cashier called the Grocery Department twice. Behind me the line kept growing—not with buggies full of lawn and garden supplies. Shoppers with other stuff. I didn't want to fail the stay calm test. So I check my cell phone again—watched a funny pet video. Laughter is a tool to use to pass the stay calm test.

The customer started complaining about store employees that do not change the prices when items go off sale. The cashier remained friendly and did not become frazzled—at least on the outside.

Silent self-talk was my go-to. Because I wanted to pass the stay calm test. So I avoided eye contact with the customer as she continued to grumble. So I read the labels on my items. And then thought about why the Easter

Bunny gets all the credit when the chickens lay all the eggs. How fair is that?

The loud lady leaves—it's my turn to checkout. I muster a fake smile as the cashier says her required mantra from the latest training program, "Did you find everything you wanted?" No snarky comments about the obnoxious customer from me. I passed the stay calm test. Yea!

The holiday traffic was heavy. So some drivers turned into lane-hoppers and horn-honkers. But I wanted to pass the stay calm test. Slow drivers that drive in the fast lane are a trigger.

Fate knocked on my car door to push the envelope. Wouldn't you know it? The person beeping her horn be-

hind me was the loud lady from the store. Should I stare and glare? Should I grumble and mumble? Should I huff and puff?

"Oh bother" said Winnie the Pooh. "I'd say thistles, but nobody listens to me, anyway" complained Eeyore. "Help, help," cried Piglet, "a Heffalump, a Horrible Heffalump!" and he scampered off as hard as he could, still crying out, "Help, help, a Herrible Hof-falump! Hoff, hoff, a Hellible Horralump! Holl, holl, a Hof-fable Hellerump!"

Instead, I chuckled. And turned the radio up.

"Something wonderful begins to happen with the simple realization that life, like an automobile, is driven from the inside out, not the

other way around. As you focus more on becoming more peaceful with where you are, rather than focusing on where you would rather be, you begin to find peace right now; in the present...I'm merely talking about learning to be less bothered by the actions of people...The more patient you are, the more accepting you will be of what is, rather than insisting that life be exactly as you would like it to be...When you look at life and its many challenges as a test, or series of tests, you begin to see each issue you face as an opportunity to grow, a chance to roll with the punches."

—Richard Carlson, *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff: Simple Ways to Keep the Little Things from Taking Over Your Life.*

**MELISSA MARTIN, PH.D.,** is an author, columnist, educator, and therapist. She lives in Ohio.

## OPEN FORUM

### AARP Hawai'i: Workers, Public Loses When Hawai'i Saves Bill Failed to Pass

**By Craig Gima, Communications Director**  
**AARP Hawai'i**

**S**enate Bill 1374 to create a Hawai'i Saves Retirement Savings Program died in a conference committee meeting and the meeting ended without an agreement on a final version of the bill.

"Tonight was a huge loss for half of our private-sector employees who currently have no way to save at work via payroll deduction," said Barbara Kim Stanton, AARP Hawai'i State Director. "This bill would have helped 216,000 private-sector workers and about 15,000 small businesses in Hawai'i with an easy way to save for retirement at work. It would have saved taxpayers money because when more people save, fewer people will retire broke and the state will not have to spend as much money on social services like housing and food assistance, and medical care."

Very similar versions of Senate Bill 1374 passed the Senate and House unanimously. The differences are supposed to be resolved in conference committee for a bill to advance. But while the Senate appointed

conferees earlier this week, the House did not appoint conferees until just before the deadline Thursday and then scheduled a conference committee meeting just 20 minutes before another deadline to reach agreement on bills. In the end, the Senate agreed to accept the House proposal, but both sides said they didn't have approval on how much money to put into the bill so the bill cannot proceed.

The decision to appoint House conferees came only after AARP Hawai'i volunteers rallied at the State Capitol on Wednesday and urged the House not to kill the bill in secret. The bill would have died Thursday if conferees were not appointed. A similar Hawai'i Saves bill died last year when the House, at the 11th hour, pulled their conferees from meeting.

Senate Bill 1374 had widespread support among small businesses, workers and taxpayers, Stanton said.

About half of Hawai'i's private-sector workers are not able to save through payroll deduction, the easiest and most effective way to save. People are 15 times more likely to save if it comes out of their paychecks be-

fore they get a chance to spend their money. Only five percent of people will actually go out on their own to save. So creating an easy way to save at work is key to getting more people to save.

Most small businesses find it too complicated and expensive to offer payroll savings programs. The bill would create a public-private partnership to give small businesses who do not have a savings plan and workers access to a payroll savings program at no cost to businesses. The money would not be held by the state, but in individual worker accounts held by private, reputable financial services businesses.

About half of all workers have less than \$2,500 in retirement savings. If workers retire broke, taxpayers will likely need to support them with housing, food and medical assistance. If more people save, the state and taxpayers will benefit from reduced future need for public assistance.

In Oregon, the first state to offer a state-facilitated retirement program, more than 72,000 workers have saved more than \$16 million in the first 21 months and 72 percent of employees offered the chance to save, stay in the program.

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## BOOK REVIEW

# VOICE—POETRY BY THE YOUTH OF KALIHI

By Rose Cruz Churma

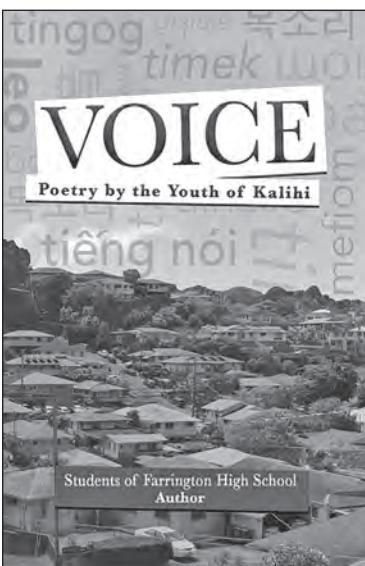
**V**OICE, Poetry by the Youth of Kalihi by the Students of Farrington High School. The book is independently published and was released on April 25, 2019 in two formats—as paperback and Kindle version, both available via Amazon at \$5 per book. 133 p. ISBN-10: 1092996478 and ISBN-13: 978-1092996471.

This is a collection of poems written by Farrington High School students enrolled in the English Language

Learner (ELL) program. This initiative was intended to create a platform for culturally and linguistically diverse youth who believe that they have no voice—that “they do not matter.”

The results are poems from the heart—stories of leaving one’s home for another land, searching for identity, seeking approval, and adjusting to a new language. The students write in English but also in the language or dialect that they grew up with, or can best express their feelings.

The book consists of two parts. The first part contains the poetry authored by more than 50 students from five ELL classes at Farrington High School during the 2018-



19 school year. The second part provides insight into these students—through a photograph and a short statement from each author—their dreams and hopes for the future.

In the process of writ-

ing their poetry, the students were mentored by seasoned poets and authors who have the same experiences as immigrants—learning English as a second (or 3rd, 4th..) language, and trying to assimilate into a new culture, without losing one’s own.

As Amalia Bueno writes in the back cover of the book—“Working with these student poets to help find and express their voices in this amazing anthology has been a joyful, teaching and learning experience for me. Their beautifully crafted expressions of identity, poetics of place and love of community reflect that ‘poetry is not a luxury, it is a vital necessity of our existence.’ Their essential

poems enrich all our lives.” Amalia, who served as one of several poets who conducted workshops for the students, is a published poet and fiction writer. She also teaches poetry at UH Manoa.

The book provides a snapshot of the thoughts and feelings of youth at the edges—children of immigrant families in one of O’ahu’s tough neighborhoods. In their own words, they tell us what it means to grow up in today’s Hawaii`i. It is a must read for educators, policymakers, parents—and those on the other more privileged side—so we can all realize that under the color of our skin, or the cadence of our accents, we’re all the same.

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

## Martial Law Victims Start Receiving Checks

By Janvic Mateo

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

**M**ANILA, Philippines — Victims of human rights violations during the martial law period will start receiving \$1,500 or around P78,000 today, May 1, 2019.

Former Commission on Human Rights chair Loretta Ann Rosales confirmed that the distribution of checks would begin in Butuan City for eligible claimants in the Caraga region.

Rosales is honorary chair of human rights group Claimants 1081, which will assist in the distribution for eligible claimants.

Claimants 1081 executive director Zenaida Mique said there are about 120 eligible claimants in the region.

“We expect them to get their checks (starting May 1) until noon of May 2,” Mique told The STAR.

On Facebook, Claimants 1081 said the distribution to eligible claimants in Region IX would be held in Pagadian City from May 14 to 17.

Meanwhile, those from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region and Region XII will be able to receive their checks

during the distribution in Cotabato City on May 20 to 24 and 27 to 29, respectively.

The schedule for other areas has yet to be released.

The distribution will be the third for the estimated 6,500 eligible members of the successful \$2-billion class suit filed against the Marcos family in Hawaii in the 1990s.

The money was sourced from the estimated \$20 million worth of ill-gotten assets recovered from an aide of

former first lady and Ilocos Norte Rep. Imelda Marcos.

Last month, a federal judge in New York affirmed the settlement agreement that divided the assets, with \$13.75 million going to members of the class suit.

The Philippine government was set to receive \$4 million, with the remaining going to other claimants, including the Golden Buddha Corp. and the estate of Roger Roxas that allegedly discovered the fabled Yamashita

treasure.

In an e-mail to The STAR last April 13, American human rights lawyer Robert Swift confirmed the \$13.75 million has been transferred to the settlement fund created for the members of the Hawaii class suit.

Swift also confirmed US federal judge Manuel Real, who handled the Hawaii class suit, approved their request for \$4.125 million in attorney’s fees to be deducted from the new settlement

fund obtained for martial law victims.

The requested fee represents 30 percent of the \$13.75-million settlement that the class would receive from the proceeds of the sale of paintings seized from Vilma Bautista, an aide of the former first lady.

After initially engaging in negotiations on how to divide the money, the Philippine government in March tried to stop the implementation of the settlement agreement for supposedly being “grossly disadvantageous” to the government. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))



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## "Why do you read the Chronicle now? Why should we continue reading the Chronicle in the future?"

As part of the year-long celebration of our 25th year in publication, the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle is sponsoring a special essay contest where readers can personally express the impact of our newspaper in their lives and on Filipinos in Hawaii.

In an era dominated by online media, traditional print publications seem to be fading. But some community newspapers like the Chronicle are surviving and thriving after 25 years—because of readers like you!

Now you have a chance to tell us and everyone why you read our newspaper and why people should continue reading it for the next 25 years and into the future. You could win \$250 or other prizes for your essay.

Download the official entry form and template from our website at [www.thefilipinochronicle.com](http://www.thefilipinochronicle.com) and enter now to win! Or you can call our office at 808-330-8981 or 808-678-8930 to send you an official entry form.

## SUBMISSIONS INFORMATION

- The essay must be between 400-700 words, typed and double-spaced, using the official entry form and template from our website.
- Judging is based on originality, creativity and

composition. Chronicle staff members will choose their favorites with the publisher/editor selecting the final winning entry. The full winning essay and excerpts of runner-up essays will be published in a summer edition of the newspaper with their accompanying photo.

- Only one essay entry per person is accepted. All ethnic and age groups are welcome to enter. Relatives of the Chronicle staff are ineligible to participate in this essay contest.
- All entries become the rights of the Chronicle for use in publication and promotions. They may be edited for clarity and space.

## PRIZES AND PUBLICATION

Three grand prize winner of \$250 will be awarded to the reader who has submitted an essay that best answers the above questions. There will be one winner from High School (ages 15-18), one from College (ages 19-26) and one from Adult (ages 27-70) entry submissions. Winning entries will be published in full in a summer edition of the Chronicle. Runner-up essays will be excerpted as well.

All those who submit essays are eligible to win additional prizes, such as gift cards (restaurants, gas, stores, discount services, etc.)

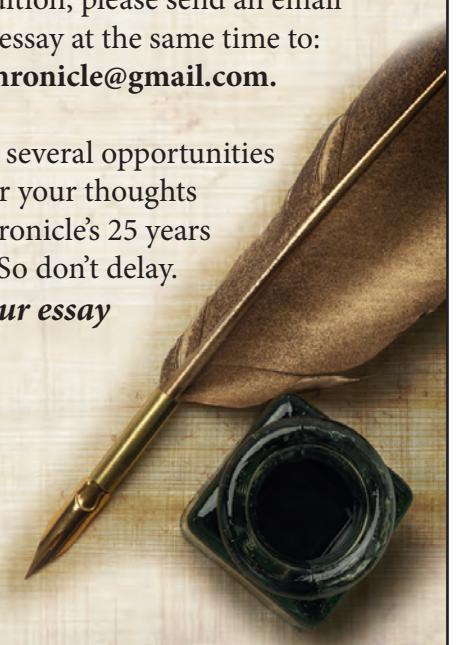
or merchandise from the Chronicle, community and essay contest sponsors. Winners will be notified and may pick up their prizes at the Chronicle office in Waipahu.

## DEADLINE: JUNE 1, 2019

Please snail mail a hard copy of your essay on or before June 1. It must be postmarked by May 27 in order to qualify for the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted. Hawaii Filipino Chronicle 94-356 Waipahu Depot Rd., Flr. 2, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797. In addition, please send an email copy of your essay at the same time to: [filiptinochronicle@gmail.com](mailto:filiptinochronicle@gmail.com).

There are several opportunities to win just for your thoughts about the Chronicle's 25 years and beyond. So don't delay.

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## AS I SEE IT



By Elpidio R. Estioko

**A**ccording to the book, Philip Vera Cruz: A Personal History of Filipino Immigrants and the Farmworker's Movement, "one hundred thousand Filipino men left the Philippines for Hawaii and the mainland United States during the first 30 years of the twentieth century. The earliest groups of these men were recruited to work in the sugar cane and pineapple fields of Hawaii. But many also made their way to the mainland... and found work on farms throughout California and the Pacific Northwest and in Alaska's canneries."

The Filipino immigrants in Hawaii, Alaska and California were known as "Manongs," an Ilokano term of respect for an older person. I don't know, however, how it carried negative connotation in Hawaii during those early days circa 2012, and even before that, because the title had been used in Hawai'i to refer to Filipinos in a derogatory manner, according to HawaiiNewsNow.

So, instead of finding the cause on how this happened, the University of Hawaii formed Operation Manong (OM) where the founders sought to restore the traditional positive meaning of the word through positive activities. Under the program, university students became "Manongs" and "Manangs" to younger children "Adings." OM was started by a coalition of University students and faculty, Filipino community leaders, and the Immigrant Services Center (ISC). The organization provided tutoring and mentoring to new Filipino

# Lest We Forget the "Manongs" of Hawaii, Alaska, California

immigrant children.

On March 25, 2012, OM held an anniversary celebration at the Filipino Community Center (FilCom) in Waipahu, Oahu, HI that reflected on best practices and thanked OM alumni, students and staff for their service and leadership in restoring the respect accorded to the word "Manong."

Among those who attended the March 25 reunion included former Insurance Commissioner and businessman Robin Campion; media and television producer Emme Tomimbang; Vice Speaker Joey Manahan; Office of Hawaiian Affairs Chairperson Collette Machado; and teachers Johnny Verzon and Milli Asuncion. Amy Agbayani was the first director of OM followed by Melinda Tria Kerkvliet and the current director is former OM Clem Bautista.

In California, their contributions to the labor movement, while not acknowledged for a while, is now slowly but surely being recognized by all sectors. In fact, most of their leaders, including book author Philip Vera Cruz and labor organizer Larry Itliong settled in California and led the some 1,500 farmers in the grape farms of Delano and the canneries of Alaska working for descent wages and exposing farm/factory labor malpractices.

While on Labor Day we are honoring the contributions that workers have made nationwide, in California, we are missing the exploits made by Filipino-Americans. We remember Cesar Chavez's contribution to the farm labor movement, but little that we know, there's a Filipino-American who equally contributed to the labor movement in California. That man is Larry Itliong, a native of Pangasinan who immigrated to the

US in 1920.

In fact, they don't even know that Larry Itliong and his group of "Manongs" (Filipino farm workers) were very much far ahead than Chavez's group in staging a legitimate farm labor strike in Delano, California. Itliong and his Filipino farm members of the West Coast Agricultural Workers (WCAW) which he organized in the 1920's and the Filipino Farm Labor Union (FFLU) in California which he founded in 1956, successfully led the grape strike of 1965. This drew worldwide attention and support... which ultimately led to the unionization of California's farm workers. After 1965, Itliong has attained national prominence, together with his co-farm workers/leaders Philip Vera Cruz, Benjamin Gines, and Pete Velasco. During the strike, they demanded wages equal to the federal minimum wage. Although they didn't succeed in negotiating a contract with the Coachella Valley grape grower, they did succeed in gaining higher wages. The strike was known as the Delano Grape Strike of 1965.

The success of the Delano Strike paved the way to a merg-

er between his group and that of Chavez to form the United Farm Workers (UFW). Itliong served as its vice president with Cesar Chavez as president.

Most history books mention Chavez and the United Farm Workers but no mention of Itliong and his Filipino group. For many years, Itliong and his group were sent to oblivion until the first public art memorial honoring Filipino American farm workers was unveiled on June 24, 1995 in Los Angeles with Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz as its most prominent historical figures. Also Itliong was posthumously honored in 2010 by inclusion in a mural at California State University.

In 2013, California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law AB123 authored by Assemblymember Rob Bonta mandating the teaching in California schools the contributions of FilAms in the California labor movement. Larry's son, Johnny Itliong, was made a member of the curriculum committee and the latter told me, in one of our casual meetings, that the committee is moving and hoping to complete the curriculum, so the textbook will be distributed to schools in California soon.

The City of Milpitas with then Mayor Jose Esteves likewise recognized FilAm farm workers' labor contributions by hanging a community mural of the Manongs led by Itliong and Chavez in the Children's Corner of the Milpitas Library on October 12, 2012. The mural project was spearheaded by husband and wife Denis and Melissa Nievera-Lozano with the support of the City Council and the Milpitas Library Advisory Commission (LAC).

Also in 2013, Gov. Brown signed into law a bill proclaiming October 25 as Larry Itliong Day with the City of Milpitas also declaring the month of October as Larry Itliong Month.

Still in 2013, the Alvarado Middle School in Union City was renamed by the City Council and the New Haven Unified School District to Itliong-Vera Cruz Middle School, in honor of the two FilAm leaders.

These are just a few of the recognitions Itliong and his fellow "Manongs" reaped in their efforts to California's farm labor movement!

*For feedbacks, comments... please email the author @ estiokoelpidio@gmail.com.*

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### Minimum Wage Hike Bill Deferred to Next Year

**H**awaii lawmakers deferred to next year a bill that would raise the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2023. The bill made it to second reading before failing to advance. The last minimum wage bill to pass was in 2014.

House Bill 1191 would have boosted the minimum wage for private employers by \$1.80 — Hawaii's current minimum wage is \$10.10 per hour — to \$12 as of Jan. 1, 2020.

The bill would have also provided a tax credit for small businesses to offset the cost of the increased wages.

Raise Up Hawaii Coalition issued a statement: "Raise Up Hawai'i is deeply disappointed that the Legislature failed to increase the mini-

mum wage this year.

"Local families are often forced to work two or three jobs to survive because of our state's exorbitant cost of living, effectively the highest in the nation. Not enacting a living wage this year only increases the urgency of doing so next year."

"Hawaii's most economically vulnerable workers and their families, including thousands of children, will continue to suffer from the lack of a minimum wage that meets the state's own self-sufficiency standard of \$17 an hour. \$10.10 an hour does NOT allow our families to meet basic needs, as evidenced by the suffering on the streets."

The bill received opposition by several business groups as the Hawaii Restaurant Association, Chamber of Commerce

Hawaii, Retail Merchants of Hawaii, and the Hawaii Food Industry Association.

Sherry Menor-McNamara, President & CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, said "We appreciate and thank our legislators for the hard work and thoughtfulness put forth on this issue. Our members recognize that employees are a big part of what make their businesses a success and do everything they can to take care of them and retain them through both wages and benefits."

"Living wage is a complex issue with no singular answer. We need to continue to work together to come up with solutions that address our high cost of living, lack of available and affordable housing and reliance on imported goods and energy."

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## CANDID PERSPECTIVES



By Emil Guillermo

**I** admit to having a strange pang of Filipino/Asian American pride knowing that Noel Francisco—his father a Filipino immigrant who came to America to practice medicine—argued before the Supreme Court of the United States as the U.S. Solicitor General last week.

Too bad he was on the wrong side of the case against that citizenship question on the Census 2020 form.

Is this how some African Americans feel about Justice Clarence Thomas?

Thomas doesn't say much at oral arguments. But you know his stoic presence will be felt in a Trump-branded SCOTUS World, where 5-4 decisions are becoming more frequent.

And The Donald wants the citizenship question because he sees the Census as his new xenophobic tool.

He can't lose. If people take part in the census truthfully, the fear of ICE is real. If people avoid the census, Trump's demographic white supremacy stays intact. Accuracy be damned. Undercount assured. Minorities inch closer to becoming the majority? Not on The Donald's watch.

Most importantly, an undercount of Filipinos and all people of color, ends up in redrawn congressional districts and hundreds of millions of dollars misdirected away from us.

Why spend any money on Filipino American concerns if there aren't any Filipino Americans, right?

This is the reason civil rights advocates are calling the citizenship question's insertion the most important issue facing our communities today.

It's there to assure an undercount. And Trump wants an undercount.

Fair minded people want a correct and accurate count.

The stakes are high. If the count is wrong, our invisibility is assured, policy-wise.

That's not the way it's sup-

# Want An Accurate Count of Filipinos and All People of Color? Then Dump the Citizenship Question

posed to be in America.

## Francisco carries Trump's water

It leaves us with a spectacle like the one at SCOTUS last week, where we had one of ours, acting counter to our interests. What a sight: Francisco carrying the water for Trump and his Commerce Secretary, Wilbur Ross.

Thank goodness Justice Sonia Sotomayor was there to take apart Francisco's argument.

Anyone reading through the transcript will see Francisco was dutiful to his side.

But not necessarily to the facts.

Right from the start, Francisco characterized the question as one that "that has been asked as part of the census in one form or another for nearly 200 years."

But it was a mischaracterization and Justice Sonia Sotomayor caught it.

"I'm sorry, it's not been a part of the survey, which is where he reinstated it, since 1950. And for 65 years, every Secretary of the Department of Commerce, every statistician, including this Secretary's statistician, recommended against adding the question," Sotomayor shot back. "So it may be that 200 years of asking a citizenship question in other forms may be true, but not on the short survey. That's what's at issue here."

Sotomayor wasn't giving an inch on anything.

Not on whether Ross was right to go with the citizenship question when a statistical model would be even more accurate—by as much as 99.5 percent.

Nor on why a citizenship question would be better than a statistical model augmented with administrative records.

Francisco couldn't answer that one straight. If he did, it would sound something like, "It's best for the President's sense of xenophobia and rooting out those dreaded illegal immigrants, drug dealers, and MS-13 types."

Instead, Francisco said Ross thought it would be the

kind of data useful in enforcing the Voting Rights Act, which sounds good but doesn't further the Census's main purpose of enumeration.

"This seems like he thought of something," said Sotomayor to Francisco, imagining Ross's thoughts. "I want to add a citizenship question. I don't know why, but this is a solution in search of a problem. I've got to find a problem that fits what I want to do."

You mean like save Ross' cabinet post and please his boss?

Sotomayor figured that what Ross proposed would result in an error of at least 500,000 in the unreporting population. And to fix the error later would cost more than if the Census Bureau had just used the statistical model and administrative records in the first place.

Sounds like the kind of made-to-order chaos the Trump administration would love.

You can read the transcript of the oral arguments here.

There is no way after reading the transcript you come away thinking, "My, this citizenship question is such a great idea!"

Unless you see the question as the Census version of Trump's border wall.

Sotomayor had help from Justice Elena Kagan who provided a one-two punch. She both praised Francisco for his argument, then pointed out the weakness in Ross' decision to use the citizenship question. And there was my fave, Justice

Stephen Breyer, a fellow Lowell High SF alumn, who probed and offered a bit of levity on the kind of questions asked in the Census. Trump appointees seemed ready to defend the question. Kavanaugh pointed out the UN recommends a citizenship question. While true, the Census has asked the question in the long-form American Community Survey. This was about using the question in the short form that is sent out every 10 years. As for Justice Gorsuch, he seemed unwilling to acknowledge that the citizenship question would result in people not finishing and filling out the actual census form. Reduced response rates? We just don't know, he said.

Maybe if he empathized with the undocumented he'd understand.

## The politics of fear at work

The hearing ends with Francisco in rebuttal offering one last meek defense for the citizenship question. He actually said that if one is allowed to challenge the citizenship question, then everyone would have standing to go after any or all the questions on the form! Is that so bad?

He then had the gall to posit a hypothetical challenge to the sex question "because it limits individuals to a binary choice." (That added a touch of PC irony because the court decided this week to take up the issue of whether workplace discrimination laws apply to trans individuals. It's sure to be another pendulum swing for this 5-4 court.)

Sotomayor couldn't let Francisco get away with his argument that people could get

together to "knock off any question on the census" they didn't like.

**JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR:** Are you suggesting that Hispanics are boycotting the census, that -

**GENERAL FRANCISCO:** Not -

**JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR:** Are you suggesting they don't have, whether it is rational or not, that they don't have a legitimate fear?

**GENERAL FRANCISCO:** Not in the slightest, Your Honor.

It was perhaps the most significant ounce of truth uttered by Francisco in the whole hearing. Essentially, he admitted that yes, what we had here was the politics of fear at work. It's Trump's *raison d'être*, after all. And it's intended to assure an undercount.

But really, it should be enough to keep the question out of Census 2020.

Oh, but that's in normal times when truth, compassion and empathy still count.

After the hearing, most court observers seemed to think it doesn't seem to matter in a Trump-branded court in a Trump-branded democracy.

Not with five votes apparently at the ready to make it hard for us to be counted correctly.

Let's hope that's not the case.

**EMIL GUILLERMO** is a veteran journalist and commentator. He was on the editorial board of the *Honolulu Advertiser*, and a columnist for the *Starr-Bulletin*. Twitter @emilamo



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## FEATURE

# LOSING OUR EDGE

By Wilma Gonzales Buenaobra

**F**ascinating and alarming it is to be in the midst of this *Information Age*. Prior to its full-scale launch, it declared to deliver: a. reduced stress, b. more leisure time, c. a more efficient way of doing things, d. more family time and, d. people will have more time to pursue hobbies. *Au contraire!*

We were simply catapulted into doing things differently. There obviously have been benefits, such as being able to reach anyone, anywhere. Relieved to be able to call 911 without delay in dire situations wherever one may be. But, as we humans also have a natural proclivity to pushing the envelope, so to speak - the coin soon revealed its flipside - the convenience has brought its downside. Road accidents have increased due to talking and/or texting while driving. Many students have been run over due to their cavalier attitude of crossing the street while talking or texting; completely oblivious of traffic and ignoring running cars. Safety now seems to be the drivers' sole responsibility! You look because I won't! Yep, too busy here with my cellphone!



Several years back, while stopped at an intersection, waiting for the traffic light to turn green, we were rear-ended by a 21-year old who clearly, was texting. I might add that the increase in his car insurance costs thereafter would have taught him a good lesson, or not! Who knows!

The simple household telephone, erstwhile a necessity, has now been downgraded to a nondescript landline, eyed suspiciously as an antiquated device, albeit only found useful by seniors.

The ubiquitous and sometimes innocuous appendage of the next generation of *homo sapiens*, is the cellphone - the most important item in every teenager's life. One that dominates the scene, believe it or not, worldwide! Even Russia, but especially China, Singapore, India, the Philippines, and of course, the USA!

Passengers in all modes of transport, planes, trains, cars, see all humans hunched, heads are bowed, not in reverence to

the Almighty but simply bent, intent on what seem to be so very important businesses on their cellphones. People these days do not even have time to greet anyone. No one smiles, by the way. God forbid, one takes their eyes off their cellphones to look at someone in the eye with the threat of an exchange of pleasantries! It seems that our ocular assets were simply made to be glued on the cellphone, lest something escapes! Teen dates have invariably become two young people sitting at a table, in a restaurant, texting! Everything now relegated to the cellphone: music, camera, ad infinitum, including breaking up!

Quite an interesting phenomenon; that in this *Information Age*, we have unwittingly stunted our growth, our capacity and ability to express ourselves. Misunderstandings and misconceptions abound, thus broken relationships have arisen. What to say of the rising teen depression brought about by sharing too much information! We expose ourselves at the most vulnerable moment of our tender years. Thus, we open ourselves to be judged! Most often than not, rudely and cruelly - which we unfortunately, are not equipped to handle! Ergo teen depre-

sion is on the rise that leads to suicide. If you can't handle the heat, why did you expose yourself to the fire?

No longer do we speak much, or enjoy a healthy and leisurely exchange of ideas. We seldom carry conversations, discuss, rehash, and rethink matters through without getting "worked up." Mostly reacting, albeit, emotionally, rather than responding rationally.

In the face of e-mail, blog, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on, we have developed an attitude "I have no time for this!" "Speak quickly and get to the point!" Yet we spend entire sleepless nights, copious and alarming number of hours in front of whatever device we have in our hand! It is an alarming and worrisome addiction! So much so, that in China, well-heeled parents send their device-addicted youngsters to a device rehab to wean them from cellphone dependency! Try to get them back on track with dealing with their studies and face the real world - not the cyber world!

Truly, technological advancement in cyber communication, has jettisoned us to a new age. But along with its undeniable convenience comes insidious effects. Abbreviated words via text messages and the social media, have clearly corrupted, and destroyed proper spelling and correct grammar! Truly, it has also diminished our ability to communicate effectively, with substance, clarity, and purpose. Often there is a sad disconnect between what we say, what we mean, and what we actually have in mind! Indeed, in the face of all these techno-

logical advancement, we have seriously compromised our edge, our ability to communicate skillfully and effectively express our ideas.

Only in the human species can you find a speaker who has the power to percolate anger, inspire ideas, give hope, make you cry, and create sheer laughter. A beautiful song and a well-written poem, allows us to get in touch with our higher mind, our finer sensibilities. It can be a source of inspiration, and can even heal a broken spirit. Communication skills coupled with diplomacy is worth cultivating. But how do we now develop these skills? We don't think much, nor do we talk much! The ability to navigate around different Apps, computer games, and texting is all our youngsters know to do.

In the face of our technological advancement, healthy, skillful, and excellent verbal and written communication, is now lost in our younger generations. Aspiring to excel in them is nonexistent. Just read the abysmal product of our self-proclaimed "journalists" wannabe "writers." Clearly, we are fast losing our edge!

Thus, original movie of *Planet of the Apes*, starred by Charlton Heston, wherein *homo sapiens* grunt, groan, and growl while the anthropoids, eloquently and brilliantly express themselves - may not be far from becoming the future reality!

**WILMA GONZALES BUENAOBRA** is a retiree from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and a former professor of Tagalog at George Washington University.

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### Bail Reform Bill to Address Jail Overcrowding Passes

**A** landmark house bill (HB 1552 HD2 SD2 CD1) designed to take a thorough look at our system of handling people who are arrested and incarcerated passed. The bill seeks to address overcrowded jails and bring equity to our system of bail.

Rep. Gregg Takayama

(Pearl City, Waimalu, Pacific Palisades), Chair of the House Public Safety, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee, said the reform is long overdue.

"This measure will help create safer, smarter and more transparent systems of corrections and criminal justice in Hawaii," said Rep. Takayama.

Some of the bill's features include: establishing a Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission (the Commission is responsible for helping transition to a more effective rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system, investigating complaints, and examining best practices in other systems) and implement recommenda-

(continue on page 13)

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## LEGAL NOTES



**By Atty. Reuben S. Seguritan**

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) states that an alien convicted of two or more crimes involving moral turpitude, not arising out of a single scheme of criminal misconduct is removable from the United States. The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) defines a "crime involving moral turpitude" as one which is inherently base, vile, or depraved, and contrary to the accepted rules of morality and the duties owed between persons or to society in general.

Passing a bad check does not seem to be a serious offense. However, if the person who passes the bad check is an alien or a lawful permanent

## Passing A Bad Check Can Lead to Deportation

resident in the United States, he can be removed upon conviction as stated in the INA.

In a recent case decided by the US Court of Appeals in 2019, a question arose as to whether the conviction of passing a bad check by a Missouri court constituted a conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude, and hence, would warrant the removal of the convicted person. In 2017 in Missouri, Dolic was convicted of 3 counts of receiving stolen property and 4 counts of passing a bad check. At the time of her conviction Dolic was a lawful permanent resident in the US.

After her conviction, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) charged Dolic with removal from the United States. Dolic filed a motion to terminate the removal proceedings and alleged that the DHS had not demonstrated that her

conviction for the crimes of receiving stolen property and passing bad checks qualified as crimes involving moral turpitude. The Immigration Judge (IJ) denied Dolic's petition and stated that Dolic's convictions were for crimes involving moral turpitude. The BIA affirmed when Dolic appealed the IJ's decision.

In Dolic's appeal before the US Court of Appeals, she raised the question of whether her convictions qualified as a crime involving moral turpitude. The Court of Appeals looked at Missouri's criminal statute and the elements of the crime of passing a bad check. Missouri law states:

A person commits the offense of passing a bad check when he or she: (1) With the purpose to defraud,...passes a check...knowing that it will not be paid by the drawee, or that there is no such drawee; or

(2) ...passes a check...knowing that there are insufficient funds in or on deposit with that account for the payment of such check...in full...upon such funds then outstanding, or that there is no such account or no drawee and fails to pay the check...within ten days after receiving actual notice in writing that it has not been paid because of insufficient funds or credit with the drawee or because there is no such drawee.

The Court of Appeals noted that the crime of passing a bad check is proven by evidence establishing that an accused passed a check with the purpose to defraud, knowing it would not be paid by the drawee and that the evidence is sufficient to establish those elements. This means that the conviction for passing a bad check was a crime involving moral turpitude. The Court of Appeals then looked at the charging documents of Dolic

for her convictions and saw that the language included the element "with the purpose to defraud."

The Court of Appeals concluded that the conviction of Dolic for passing the bad checks qualified as crimes involving moral turpitude and denied Dolic's petition.

This case is important because it highlights how a lawful permanent resident can be removed from the United States for crimes that are common and not as heinous as murder or homicide. Lawful permanent residents and aliens with visas in the United States must be careful and always mindful to act in accordance with law in all of their dealings to make sure they are not removed.

**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](http://www.seguritan.com)

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## Legislature Passes Two Measures to Help Prevent Youth Suicides

The Hawaii State Legislature has passed two measures to prevent and bring awareness to youth suicides. Suicide was the leading cause of injury-related deaths for Hawaii youth from 2013 to 2017.

HB655 HD1 SD1 designates September as "Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month" to promote public awareness regarding suicide prevention and education, resources, and support available to individuals, families, and communities.

HB330 HD1 SD1 CD1 appropriates \$150,000 to the Department of Health to support youth suicide early interven-

tion, prevention, and education initiatives in all counties focusing on youth between the ages of 10 through 24.

Both bills advance to Governor David Ige for approval or veto.

"It is critical that we bring awareness to suicide as a public health issue, and work to educate and support individuals, families, and communities in the state," said Representative Nadine K. Nakamura, vice chair of the Human Services & Homelessness Committee and introducer of HB330.

Suicide rates are higher among young people, especially from the neighbor islands and rural communities, and alarm-

ingly high among Hawai'i's LGBTQ youth," said Rep. Nakamura (Hanalei, Princeville, Kīlauea, Anahola, Kapa'a, Wailua).

The Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Taskforce's 2018 report to the Legislature found that the rate of suicide deaths in Hawai'i has been increasing, especially during the past 10 years. The Taskforce found that between 2012-2016, suicide was the number one cause of fatal injuries of people ages 15-44 in Hawai'i, and the number one cause of fatal injuries among all Hawai'i residents.

On O'ahu, 66 youth for every 100,000 people die as a result of suicide; on Maui it is 86

per 100,000; on Kaua'i it is 92, Papakōlea, McCully, Pāwa'a, and on Hawai'i Island it is 117. Mānoa). "We know access to

House Majority Leader Representative Della Au Belatti said, "To prevent suicide, we need significantly more challenging to bring awareness to the problem and must allocate adequate lands than on O'ahu. The Legislature is committed to providing resources to support education and early intervention," said funding to close this gap." Rep. Belatti (Makiki, Tantalus,



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**(BAIL REFORM...from page 12)**

tions of the Criminal Pretrial Task Force.

Some of the recommendations are to expedite the bail process by requiring risk assessments and bail reports be prepared within three days of admission to a community cor-

rectional center (there is currently no time requirement on bail reports) and to ensure the right to a prompt bail hearing: require that a bail hearing occur at time of a defendant's arraignment or as soon as practicable.

The bill also establishes a

Criminal Justice Institute within the office of the Chief Justice. The bill is effective July 1, 2019. Most bail provisions will be effective January 1, 2020.

The bill now moves to the full House and Senate for a final vote.

## MAINLAND NEWS

# Bill Introduced to Expand Health Care to Veterans Living in Pacific Region

**WASHINGTON,** D.C.— U.S. Senators Brian Schatz and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) introduced the Compacts of Free Association Veterans Review Act which is legislation that would create a three-year pilot program to provide hospi-

tal care and medical services to veterans living in the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia—all countries that have entered into the Compact of Free Association with the United States. The program would be part of a broader study conducted by the



Sen. Brian Schatz

Department of Veterans Affairs on whether a permanent VA facility should be established in these countries.

"We made a promise to veterans when it comes to health care," said Senator Schatz, lead Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. "This bill offers a responsible path forward to giving men and women who served the care they deserve, no matter where they live."

Veterans living in Pacific Freely Associated States often travel long distances and pay for expenses out-of-pocket to receive care. With the use of telehealth and other health services, the pilot program would deliver direct care to these veterans.

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(COVER STORY: FILCOM CENTER PRESENTS...from page 5)

Humana, Mountain-Pacific Quality Health, and Financial Benefits Insurance, Inc.

Brandon Dela Cruz, who handles marketing for the Fiesta, explains the Fiesta started as a way to bring public awareness to garner support for the building of the FilCom Center, which many in the community see as a symbol of our community.

"On a larger cultural scale, the event embodies the essence of a celebratory time in the Philippines known as 'Flores de Mayo' or 'Flowers of May' which is a festival held in the Philippines in the month of May. The Flores celebration has also taken an additional meaning with Hawaii's largest Filipino event's founder Eddie Flores, who coincidentally shares the same name," said Dela Cruz.

The FilCom Center is a non-profit organization that provides cultural, social and educational services to Hawaii's Filipinos and commu-

nity at large. It's the largest center of its kind in the U.S. and outside of the Philippines.

**Sponsors and Donors.** Organizers of the Fiesta want to acknowledge the sponsors and donators. Sponsors: L&L Hawaiian Barbeque, Western Union, Everlasting Travel, Philippine Airlines.

Donations of prizes to be given out at the event are provided by Consuelo Foundation, San Nicolas Chicharon, Jesse's Coffee Shop and Bakery, Northstar Deli and Sausages, 3 Sets Pearl Jewelry, Henri and Lina Calderon, Reynold and Agnes Edralin, Martin Lau, and Pagoda Floating Restaurant.

Event organizers invite the community for another day of memorable fiesta fun with family and friends. Mabuhay to the annual Filipino Fiesta. Mabuhay to organizers and participants.

(HFC columnist Carlota Hufana Ader contributed to this cover story.)

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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**OAHU FILIPINO COMMUNITY COUNCIL (OFCC) PRESENTS THE MISS OAHU FILIPINA 2019** | June 1, 2019; 6:00 PM | Marriot Waikiki Beach Resort | For more details call: Calvin Bagaoisan at 266-4334, Maricelle Redona at

295-5233, Raymond Sebastian at 799-6080

**FILIPINO NURSES ORGANIZATION OF HAWAII (FNOH) EXCELLENCE IN NURSING AWARDS** | August 10, 2019; 6:00 PM | Hilton Hawaiian Village Resorts Coral Ballroom | For more details call: Lolita Echauz Ching at 387-7635, Luanne Long at 754-0594

**PHILIPPINE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN HAWAII (PWAH) PRESENTS FILIPINIANA BALL 2019** | August 30, 2019; 6:00 PM | Hibiscus Ballroom, Ala Moana Hotel | Call details call: Letty Saban: 255-9429, Lina Mercado: 382-7751, Carlota Ader: 797 4381, Mimi Gozar: 312-0778

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

# Isabelleza Tabios Chosen as 2019 Childhood Immunization Champion Award for Hawaii

The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) and the Hawai'i Immunization Coalition (HIC) congratulate medical assistant, Isabelleza Kris Tabios, for receiving the 2019 Childhood Immunization Champion Award for Hawai'i.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) recognized Ms. Tabios for her significant contribution to improving public health through her work in childhood immunization.

"Ms. Tabios' knowledge of the complex childhood immunization schedule makes her a strong immu-



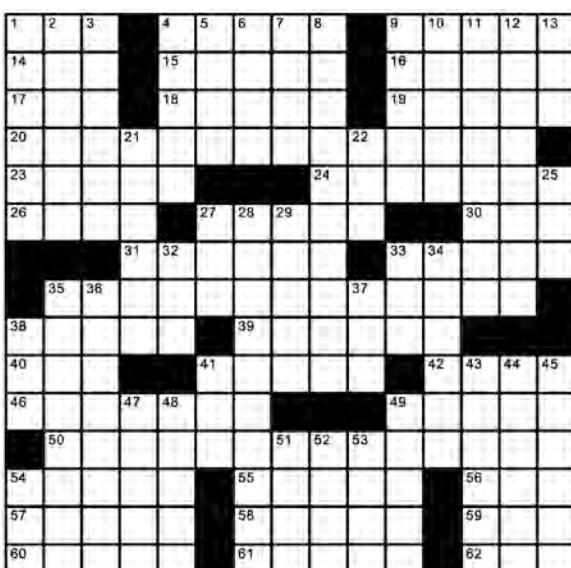
Isabelleza Kris Tabios

nization advocate and educator," said Ron Balajadia, DOH Immunization Branch chief. "She is always willing to share her knowledge with others and serves as a resource to

the physicians and staff she works with. Childhood immunization champions like Ms. Tabios increase immunizations in our state, helping to protect children, families and communities, and saving lives."

The CDC Childhood Immunization Champion Award, announced annually during National Infant Immunization Week (April 27-May 4), recognizes one individual from each of the 50 U.S. states, eight U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia for their efforts to improve public health through childhood immunizations.

Honorees are evaluated based on their leadership, collaboration, innovative strategies and advocacy efforts to support immunization activities in their communities.



35. Partner who provides capital but not known to the public  
38. Extend, in a way  
39. Enter again  
40. Choose  
41. Check casher  
42. Door fastener  
46. Capital of Venezuela  
49. Tailor, at times  
50. Former Senator from Taguig City  
54. Prank  
55. In no way  
56. Auction offering  
57. Serviceable  
58. Adult insect  
59. Bard's "before"

60. Gave an interpretation or explanation to  
61. Log home  
62. Air-to-air missile (abbrev)  
11. Crack  
12. Con  
13. Elephant's weight, maybe  
21. Domesticated bovine animals  
22. Plaything  
25. Play on words  
27. Fractional monetary unit of Japan  
28. Having frequencies  
above those of audible sound  
29. Stupid  
32. Chop  
33. Popular oil additive  
34. Like some wonders  
35. Stand between  
36. Fearless  
37. Bar staple  
38. Big bird  
41. Congratulations, of

a sort  
43. Flowering shrub  
44. Spanish lady  
45. For the time being  
47. Administer an oil  
48. Gave a fig  
49. Attach, as a patch  
51. Deep sleep  
52. Husband of Jezebel  
53. Wise one  
54. Scoundrel

(Solution will be on the next issue of the Chronicle)

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