



# MANILA MAIL

A fortnightly Filipino Newspaper in Washington, D.C.

# 'Where Have All the Soldiers Gone?'

*A Father's Day tribute to the young men who went to war*

By **JON MELEGRITO**

A circular song written in 1955 by American folk singer Pete Seeger weaves a story of flowers being plucked by young girls, who married young men, who became soldiers, and who ended up in graveyards that in time were covered with flowers. While "Where have all the flowers gone" is about soldiers who die in battle, there are, of course, soldiers who came home after the war, raised families, and lived rewarding lives.

For this Father's Day special issue, we are sharing the stories of those soldiers who survived and reunited with their families.

The stories you will read in the following pages are shared by loved ones – sons, daughters, grandchildren. They fill in the silences of unspoken memories too painful to remember. And they help recall the good times as well:

- Anita Merina remembers the way her dad converted army tent fabric into a makeshift swimming pool when she was growing up in Batanes.
- Remigio Cabacar's granddaughter Mary relates how she loves hearing her grandpa laugh.
- Agnes Conaty recalls shopping with her dad for



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**Filipino American WWII Veteran Remigio Cabacar honors his fallen comrades who had died waiting for recognition for their service and sacrifice fighting for the United States of America in WWII. Out of the more than 260,000 soldiers who served, only a few still survive and continue to endure the indignity of the 1946 Rescission Act, which stripped them of their rightful benefits and status. "I make this wreath, myself, every year," the 93-year-old veteran says proudly. – PAUL I. TAÑEDO**

- crabs and hot cinnamon rolls in San Fernando, Pampanga.
- Noel Izon as a young man spending time in the dark-room with his photographer dad.
- Ceres Busa's recollections of her dad as a "go to" person for friends.
- Ronie Nieva watching her artist dad with a pencil con-

- stantly sketching airplanes, cars, people and whatever was in front of him.
- Ana Maria de Jesus as a little girl spending siesta time with her father, listening to him sing along with Spanish tunes on the radio.
- Jolly Villa sharing an anecdote about her dad trying to use his bolo knife only to real-

- ize it was no match for Japanese bullets.
  - Agustin and Imelda Sabellino's pride in their dad refusing to surrender and fighting in the jungles as a guerrilla.
  - Pete Sarmiento's gratitude that his dad brought his family to America.
- By sharing the recollections and fondest memories

of these "ancient hearts," we ensure that their stories as soldiers and as fathers will always live on. They are evoked in the lyrics written by singer Billy Joel: "Someday we'll all be gone But lullabies go on and on. They never die. That's how you and I will be."



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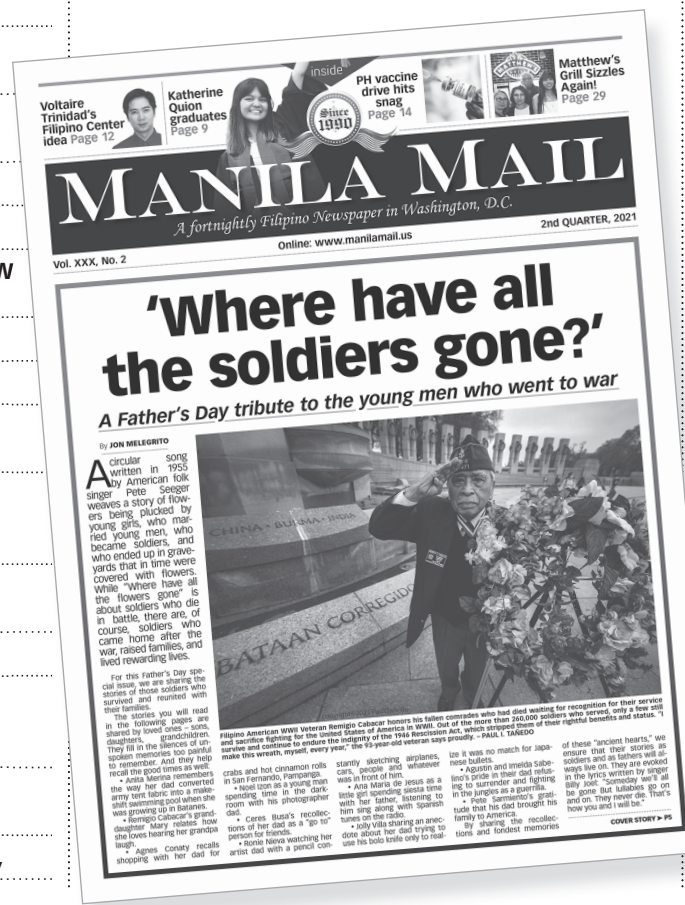
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# Campaign to Name a US Navy Warship After a Filipino

THE movement to name a US Navy Warship after Filipino American Telesforo Trinidad is drawing strong support nationwide, including leaders in Congress. In a letter to Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker, Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) said it "would recognize not only his valor but the tens of thousands of Filipinos who have served our great nation for the past 120 years. Filipinos have a long history of service with the U.S. Navy, going back to 1901. Naming a U.S. Navy warship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad would be a first for Filipino Americans."

Trinidad was 24 years old when he displayed heroism by

rescuing a couple of his fellow crew members in the boiler room explosions aboard the USS San Diego on January 21, 1915. He received the Medal of Honor that same year. Only two others have been given this award: Jose Nisperos in 1905 and Jose Calugas in 1942.

This nationwide initiative is led by the USS Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USTTC), composed of serving and retired U.S. Armed Forces, community and civic leaders, academics, corporate executives, and veterans' families. The campaign is calling on the Fil-Am community and veterans advocacy groups to write letters to elected officials and representatives.



VFW Post 5471 Adjutant Louie Maligat of Ft. Washington, MD, says "No U.S. Navy ship has been named after a Filipino despite 120 years of faithful and

loyal service by thousands of Filipinos since President McKinley authorized the recruitment of Filipinos in the Insular Force. During these precarious times of violence against many Asian Americans, the naming of a ship after Trinidad will recognize the long-standing contributions of Filipino-Americans to the security and freedom of our nation, the strong alliance between the U.S. and the Philippines since 1898 and the U.S. Navy's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Moreover, it will resonate strongly with over four million Filipino Americans who are looking for validation of the seminal contributions of Filipinos to U.S. history."

Maligat and VFW Post 5471 Commander Rey Regis are members of the Board of Directors of USSTTC.



## Vaccines to the Philippines

AT A White Houses rally on May 15, Filipino American leaders thanked the Biden administration for delivering two million doses of AstraZeneca and 1.3 million doses of the Pfizer vaccines to the Philippines. Moderna vaccines are expected to be delivered on June 21.

## Stopping Asian Hate

MEMBERS of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce DC and FilAm community leaders join other supporters at the National Day of Solidarity Against AAPI Hate rally at the national mall on May 31. Among the speakers was Filipino American actor Regina Aquino who decried "the violence of whiteness and oppression around us" and called on Filipino Americans not only to stand with Asians, but also with "our black, brown, indigenous, and LGBTQ siblings and white allies to rise together so we can move forward." PACC-DC



President Cristina Sison said "Due to the corona virus pandemic there has been an increase in vandalism and hate crimes towards businesses. We must build solidarity regardless of race, religion, color and creed."



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## ABOUT THE COVER PHOTO

In this year's commemoration at the National World War II Memorial "Araw ng Kagitingan" or "Day of Valor" (April 9), which honors the heroes of Bataan and Corregidor, Filipino World War II veteran Remigio Cabacar was the only living veteran in the Washington DC metropolitan area who attended. When the Memorial opened in 2004, more than two dozen of Cabacar's comrades were present. Over the years, most of them have died, with only five remaining today: Celestino Alameda, 104; Remigio Cabacar, 93; Potenciano Dee, 96; Justino de Lara, 103; and Rudy Panaglima, 90. The Filipino Veterans Recognition & Education Project (FilVetREP) is building a digital museum to ensure that their stories are preserved and enshrined in American history.

— **PAUL I. TAÑEDO,**  
Photographer



Anita and her dad in 1993, as they prepare to board a flight at LAX to Batanes

## Remembering Through My Senses

By **ANITA MERINA**

THINKING about my late father Catalino C. Merina, Sargent First Class, cook and tailor and Filipino American Veteran always brings up my five senses.

With my eyes I spy the military bases where I and my siblings were born and we lived, telling the tale of our family's journey and his service, Clark Airforce Base, Okinawa, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, and Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. With my nose I smell the boot polish and then recall the smell and taste of freshly baked bread on Armed Forces Day. With touch I remember the smoothness of his uniform and the rough texture of the army blanket, the way he converted army tent fabric into a makeshift swimming pool.

With my ears I recall the many stories we heard about his time as a Philippine Scout and then member of the U.S. Army, tales of foxholes and brotherhood and courage, stories of KP duty, military honors, coping with the racism of southern soldiers and even funny tales he and his compadres would tell one another.

Though he is long gone, the memories are not, and with each sense recalled he is remembered and loved and cherished all over again.

Anita Merina is a glass artist and writer living in Deal Island, Maryland. Her website is <https://Merinastudio.com> and she's working on a children's book about Olympic diver Victoria Manalo Draves.

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Remigio Cabacar with granddaughter Mary (left), granddaughter Sarah, daughter Vilma (right) and great grandkids, from left, Dillon (6), Claire (7), Eliza (3), Ian (4) and Laurel (7 months). Photo was taken in 2019 at Friendly Barbershop in Ft. Washington, MD, where the veteran, who turns 94 in October, still cuts hair.

## 'I love hearing Grandpa laugh'

By **MARY CABACAR MEGORDEN WILSON**

MOST people know Remigio Cabacar as a World War II veteran, community activist and philanthropist. But to me he is first and foremost Grandpa.

I am now thirty-three years old. My family lived with my grandparents when I was an infant. I love hearing Grandpa laugh when he tells stories of me as a baby kicking them when they were sleeping or getting them wet with a leaky diaper!

My favorite memory of Grandpa is when he gathers us together on holidays. He always makes these gatherings festive and fun for our big family, which now includes aunts, uncles, cousins, grandkids, and great-grandchildren! He prepares days in advance the most tender, delicious turkey and gravy, sweet ham and his famous light and fluffy pumpkin pies, then gets up at 4:30 in the morning to make sure all the food is cooked to perfection. The holiday doesn't officially start until Grandpa concludes the dinner prayer by cheerfully shouting, "Thank you, Lord!"

Once in 1995, Grandpa had a brain hemorrhage and was paralyzed on his right side. But this did not stop him from cooking Thanksgiving dinner. I remember him pulling a chair next to the oven so he could baste the turkey. We all know without a doubt how much Grandpa loves us and is fulfilled when we see us laughing, chatting, and satisfied with his delicious meal.

Many times, Grandpa will quietly sit down after dinner and survey the joyful scene, but on special occasions he will gather everyone together to make a speech. He loves to make speeches – about his humble beginnings, his early days in the Navy, how much he loves America and the Philippines, and how blessed he is for providing for his family. And he always makes sure we know how much he loves his "Number One" – Grandma.

I am grateful and blessed to have Remigio Cabacar as my Grandpa.

Mary, 33, is the daughter of Corby and Vilma Megorden, and lives in Gaithersburg, MD, with husband Jim and their four children, whom she home schools. She had worked as a statistician at the Food and Drug Administration.

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## 'The aroma of newly-baked cinnamon rolls'

By **AGNES CONATY**

GROWING up in San Matias, Santo Tomas, Pampanga, I eagerly looked forward to weekends to do groceries with Daddy at the supermarket in San Fernando. There, we could smell the aroma of newly-baked cinnamon rolls that paired well with a tall jug of chocolate milk.

It was a corner store that had a good view of Pampanga River. On our way to the cash register, we could see bancas through its bay windows, as we quickly grabbed crabs by the seafood freezers. He always knew which ones to choose: female crabs, whose shells swelled and tinged with pinkish hues, and packed with prized lump of meat.

When coconuts were in season, Daddy and I shared newly-cracked buko, which he picked fresh from the tree. These and about a dozen fruit trees which he and Lolo Julian planted in our family compound gave us a bountiful fruit harvest throughout the year!

Being a civil engineer, Daddy designed a really majestic study table that filled our corner second floor terrace. While I spent many hours on that table solving calculus and physics problems, Daddy would prepare a cold jug of Lipton iced tea and double decker sandwiches as we looked over my textbooks.

The study table was too heavy to carry as my family quickly escaped the three-foot lahar from Mount Pinatubo in the early 1990s, so it was sadly left behind in San Matias in our exodus to Angeles City. Miraculously, the piano suffered no damage. It was the very same one that Lolo Julian brought to their dugout under bamboo trees in Macabebe during army raids in World War II.

One of Daddy's possessions, which got lost when my family quickly escaped the three-foot lahar from Mount Pinatubo in 1991, was his yellowed engineer's



Two-year-old Agnes with her family, from left middle brother, Den, her Daddy, Abelardo Pasco, her Ima, and oldest brother, Nol. Photo was taken at their ancestral home in San Matias, circa 1964.



Abelardo Pasco with 21-year-old daughter Agnes, in 1983. He died in 1984, at the age of 64. Agnes lives in Laurel, MD, with husband Austin and son Joseph.

journal, full of his neat scribbles of formulas, the one he used as a student, when he would study with an oil lamp in Tondo, Manila where he grew up.

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Sonny Izon was 8 years old when he went to Tagaytay with his father Esmeraldo in 1952. Sonny is an independent filmmaker and lives in University Park, MD, with his wife Kathryn.

## Black and White Adventures: Growing Up with a Photographer Father

By **NOEL 'SONNY' M. IZON**

IF YOU Googled "idyllic family life", you will more than likely come across a picture of my family – a WWII hero for a father, a devoted, loving mother to six spoiled children. My siblings and I would often marvel at lucky we were to have drawn such parents in life's lottery.

Dad was a member of President Quezon's Own Guerillas (PQOG) and was later decorated with a Legion of Honor medal for his publishing The Liberator, a periodical that countered Japanese propaganda and gave hope to the Filipino people during an uncertain time. Mom became the sole breadwinner often dealing in controlled or contraband items such as rice and meat to feed our growing family.

Dad was an artist, a photographer, and a political cartoonist. From 1934 until the day he died in 1997, he worked for the Philippine Free Press, renowned weekly magazine founded in 1908. Early on, I became a photographer's assistant, just like my elder brother before me. I went with him on photo shoots, schlepping gear, loading the flashbulbs, setting up his tripod and so on. In the darkroom, I learned the alchemy of developing the photographic negative and the finished print. He was the most patient of teachers showing me the intricate processes involved in producing images from a blank sheet of paper long before I really understood what I was doing. Unbeknownst to me, I was absorbing precious lessons of exposure, contrast, cropping, composition – life-long lessons which would later pave the way for my career in filmmaking.

Over the years, it became a tradition that I would supply him with the latest photographic equipment from the US and Japan. And although he lived in Manila and I in Maryland, we manage to take some photo treks to China, Boston, Hong Kong, New York, and Washington DC. At last, I was no longer an assistant but a comrade and willing co-conspirator in our adventures.

In 1976, as usual, we were in my darkroom, experimenting with the latest color process called Cibachrome which produced brilliant color prints directly from slides. Since it was a process new to him, I took the lead. It was evening when we started but daylight when we called it a wrap. Just before we left the darkroom to go upstairs, he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "When you

## WHERE

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I were younger, I used to teach you all about photography and the darkroom and now, you have become my teacher." I know it gave him great pride and pleasure to have shared that with me. And for a son to have lived long enough to hear those words from his father, it is a treasure for all time.

I will never forget the lessons, the legacy, and the love. Although neither of my daughters became involved in the visual arts, it is my hope that I imparted to them his love for family, his love for beauty, and, most of all, his passion for truth and justice.

Once in a while when I am tinkering in my darkroom, I will hear his words echo in my mind, "Son, that time we were together in your darkroom and you were teaching me new things, I felt so close to you." And there in the dark, timeless space we often shared, I know he's never very far away. Happy Father's Day, Dad.

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## Heroes Are Quiet

By CERES BUSA

MY FATHER Pantaleon Recupero Cawagas is proof that heroes don't always wear capes. His quiet and unassuming demeanor concealed a warrior spirit that was fierce in combat and weathered the deprivations of war with steely eyed determination and grit.

Private Cawagas was a crewman of



PANTALEON  
RECUPERO  
CAWAGAS

an anti-aircraft gun based in Bataan and later Corregidor. His job was to supply the gunners with ammunition, maintain the gun, and sometimes even aim it. For each enemy plane they shot down, the crew was awarded one cigarette. He did not even smoke, but the reward really was not the cigarette. His crew fought under appalling conditions and were among

those surrendered and forced to endure the hell of a Japanese prison. He survived and went on to be a respected high school teacher, farmer, and community leader in the town of San Narciso, Zambales. His children became scholars and leaders as well.

I will always remember my father as the go-to person in the town for assistance in navigating the US Veterans Affairs bureaucracy towards obtaining benefits that were due the soldiers who fought in the war. My father, as a school-teacher, was organized, efficient, and was more than happy to help his fellow veterans. He never talked much about the war, much to the chagrin of my husband Sonny, a West Pointer whose hunger for war stories was incessant. But Sonny understood a fundamental truth about such heroes--they don't talk much. The horror of battle was best kept in the recesses of one's mind and heart and was too personal and painful to bring up.

Rest easy Dad. We the living will honor you and your comrades by striving to uphold the ideals you taught us.

Ceres Busa is a nurse and lives in Anandale, Va. with husband Sonny. Both participate in the annual Bataan Memorial Death March in White Sands, NM, a grueling 14.2 miles in the desert.

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Ronie Nieva holds a copy of "Cadet, Soldier, Guerrilla Fighter: Remembering Bataan and Corregidor," a book written and illustrated by her father, Antonio A. Nieva, and published in 2016.



Ronie at 17, with her family in their Makati home in 1966, from left: Ronie, Antonio A. Nieva, sister Pepi, Teresa Feria Nieva and newborn Juan Antonio Nieva, and sister Violeta.

## 'Don't worry. Be happy'

By RONIE NIEVA

MY DAD's name is Antonio Arevalo Nieva. Everyone called him Tony. We called him Daddy.

Daddy was funny, witty, and often sardonically clever. People were always laughing at his jokes and witticisms which we were too young to understand, but we could understand that whatever he had just uttered was considered hilarious by the relatives and friends around him. When I read his book, I found this edgy humor all over his memories of his exploits as a young soldier in World War II.

Even as children, we knew that his wartime adventures as a young man marked his life's high point. We met his guerilla friends who often gathered in our house in Makati, to reminisce over their heroic exploits over afternoon whiskeys.

The war was never far from our childhood minds. We lived with many wartime mementos. Aside from his numerous sketches of war scenes, I remember one special closet with a glass front that had his uniform, samurai sword captured from a Japanese soldier, and his wartime pistols.

One time we went to a filming of "Death Was a Stranger" a movie about his band of guerillas starring John Derek from the US and a young handsome actor named Ronald Remy. It was exciting to watch the filming of a scenes from our Dad's heroic youth. The crew roasted a deer for our family in those mountains in Luzon. The flavor and texture of that roasted venison is one of my earliest food memories.

He was a frustrated artist. His pencil was constantly in motion, sketching airplanes, cars, soldiers, and whatever was in front of him. The story told is that he wanted to become an architect, but his father steered him to law school. I cannot think of a larger contradiction between the creative mind of an artist and the disciplined precedent based thinking of a lawyer. I think this conflict must have been very difficult for him. But the artist in him could not be extinguished and I have the joy of possessing some of the pencil sketches documenting the

malaria and mountains of his guerrillero days.

Antonio Nieva, the war hero, is very fondly remembered by his grandchildren as well, especially Ming and Chuks, my sister Lolet's children, who grew up in the grandparents' house for many years. When Chuks was 4 years old, he would sit waiting patiently in the doorway of Daddy's home office, until his lolo would come and join him for the morning. When the kids went grocery shopping with the elders at United Supermarket, Daddy would tell them that the supermarket's owner, Manny Fong, was one of his compatriots during the war. Ming remembers asking Daddy why his callused feet looked strange. His answer: they were the result of walking the infamous Death March.

Hoody, Pepi's son did not have early childhood memories of Daddy, as he grew up in Hawaii. But his experience in the US Army, and service in Afghanistan, gifted him with a deep understanding of what it means to be a soldier in wartime. We have entrusted him with the artifacts of Daddy's wartime heroism, including the recently awarded Congressional Gold Medal and his original Bronze Star, awarded for heroism in a firefight in Bataan. Hoody's special display of Daddy's awards is joined by artifacts from his other grandfather, a Filipino American officer in the war in the Philippines. For Hoody, more than anyone else in the family, his grandfather serves as a role model and inspiration in a way that the rest of his civilian family cannot fully appreciate.

When Daddy died, I was asked to give a short speech during one of the pre funeral events. It was my chance to recall one of his sayings that captured an important part of his complex persona. "Don't worry, be happy" he would keep repeating. I think he tried very hard to live like that. I need to try to work that more deeply into my approach to life now.

Ronie Nieva lives in Chevy Chase, MD. and spends her retirement years gardening, painting, supporting political causes among many other pursuits.

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Taken in Orange Lake Resort, Florida on January 3, 2007, when Ana Maria brought her parents to see Disney World.

## Remembering Papa, the Soldier

By ANA MARIA DE JESUS

JOSE Javier de la Paz lived to be 92. In the last decade of his life, since he lived in the US, he learned to forgive the Japanese as a people.

My favorite memory of Papa when we were growing up was being forced to take siesta. To be sure nobody escaped to play outside, he would tune in to radio DZPI, which had an afternoon program playing Spanish songs. He stayed with us in the room, singing along with songs like El Reloj and La Cucaracha. He instilled in me a love for music.

He also raised me and my siblings to do house chores, setting himself as an

example by always washing clothes by hand or washing dishes after meals.

Papa liked to show off his magic tricks to us. One day he "swallowed" a five-centavo coin and extracted it off his ear. Unfortunately, Mama needed his help in the dental clinic with a difficult tooth extraction case. So off he went and left the coin behind for my elder sister to use. In no time, she swallowed it and could not get it out of her ear. Oh boy! Did Papa get the fright of his life! Eventually after three days, we discovered that it exited a different route.

After the war, Papa returned home and proposed to Naldie, his childhood sweetheart, who at that time was starting her dental practice in the same district. The young couple would wake up early before the vendors at the market started unloading perishable goods and they would walk a short distance to attend the first mass of the day with Papa serving at first as an acolyte, and later as a Eucharistic Minister. Papa and Mama were inseparable.

When we took them to see Disney World in 2007, Papa enjoyed the wonderful sights and exciting sounds even as he solicitously took care of Mama who had been diagnosed with early signs of Alzheimer's Disease.

On our last visit, I took him out on a stroll in his wheelchair. He was his jolly self, making jokes of his next door neighbor. I can still remember his laughter. That's my last memory of him.

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Ana Maria de Jesus retired in 2017 from the Montgomery College's Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program at the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Campus with Professor Emeritus rank. She lives with husband Alfonso in Silver Spring, Maryland.

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Fausto Blanco (center) and his two sons Felipe and Elpidio.

## My Father's Prayers

By JOLLY VILLA

WHEN I was 7 years old, my father, Fausto Blanco, would tell us stories about the war, but not before we have said our prayers. A deep religious man, he would gather our family from 6:30 to 7:00 every night. His prayers were in Ilocano. From what I can remember, he would ask forgiveness for hating the Japanese soldiers whom he thought were so mean and cruel to the women and children.

Then comes story time. My father would recall being in the front lines, carrying heavy artillery up the mountain for the US Army. He also dug holes for them to hide. While serving as sentry, he thought about using his bolo knife as a weapon in case Japanese soldiers approach the hiding places. He actually raised his bolo to defend himself, but soon realized it was no match for the enemy's bullets. So he took cover with the others.

In his aging years, my father said it took him seven years of prayer and an-


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# Graduation Showcase

This year's graduates are fortunate to have walked across the stage to receive their diplomas. Congratulations to them and their parents for their remarkable achievements. We wish our class of graduates well in their future endeavors.



As a tribute to the graduates, 7-year-old Savannah Sison Salonga made this watercolor painting, "Life After the Pandemic." She explains that the red dots means the virus is buried underground, and the sun means that life is back to

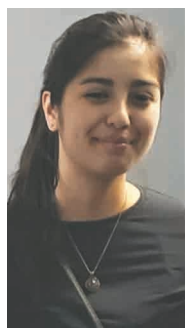


normal and we are all looking forward to a colorful life. Savi, as she is

fondly called, is a first grader at Mount Daniels in Falls Church, VA. and is the daughter of PACC-DC President Cristina Sison and Jeff Salonga.



**Jana Abelende**, North Point High School in Waldorf, MD. Graduated from the 4-year Bio-Medical CTE (Career & Technical Education program) as Summa Cum Laude at the top 5% with a GPA of 4.5-5, and honored into National Honors Society. Seeking a degree in Cell Genetics at UMBC. Daughter of John and Clarissa de la Noche Abelende of Oxon Hill, MD.



**Rebecca Arce**, 22, International Development, University of Kings College, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Daughter of Tina and Fernando Arce of Potomac, MD.



**Maren Rae Cribe-Angala**, 23, U.S. Army Military Police; daughter

of Reiner and Maria C. Angala of Prince Frederick, MD. Maren Rae is the great great granddaughter of World War II hero & founding member of the Philippine Military Academy, Col. Amando Dumlaog.



**Ianna Marie Anotado**, 18, Eleonor Roosevelt High School Graduate. Graduated with above 4.0 GPA, Science and Tech Program and AP Capstone Pro-



gram. Daughter of Ian & Mary Rose Anotado of Laurel, MD.



**Aaron Aranza**, University of California, Berkeley, Political Science & Human Rights. Son of Danny and Sonia Aranza of Alexandria, VA.

**Marcus Bengzon**, 21, Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude, Majors in Philosophy and Asia Pacific Islander American (APIA) Stud-



**Kristen Clairen Buenafe**, 18, Potomac Senior High School. Graduated with Presidential Scholar Cum Laude. Daughter

**Carlo Joseph Asinero**, 22, B.S. Information Systems, Virginia Commonwealth University, son of Kaye and Bo Asinero of Manassas, VA.



**Katherine Quion**, B.S. Biological Systems Engineering, Virginia Tech Class of 2021 MAGNA CUM LAUDE, daughter of Nathalie and Jun Anthony Quion of Washington, D.C.

of Jaime and Odessa Flores of Triangle, VA



**Rafael Roy Carbonell Dugayo**, BS Chemistry/ Magna cum laude/Virginia Commonwealth University



**Marizmelda Carbonell Dugayo**, Master of Science, Accounting and Financial Management/Virginia Commonwealth University

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**Amber Madison Nuchols**, 27, Associate of Arts in Teaching Degree in Education Instruction EC-6 Grade Levels, Austin Community College, accepted to Texas Women's University this Fall. Daughter of Eric and Tanya Bituin Owens Nuchols and granddaughter of Maurese & Kevin Owens, Arlington, VA.



**Christine Oliveros**, Master of Education, Early Childhood Special Education,

George Mason University, lives in Alexandria, Virginia



**Lauren Pabico**, 17, Osbourne Park High School. She will be in the Honors College at George Mason University, majoring in Business and Design. Daugh-

ter of Christine and Nelson Pabico of Manassas, VA.



**Kayla Tiller**, 21, Business Administration, George Washington University, daughter of Melanie Pernalosa Tiller and William "Bill" Nathaniel Tiller of Burtonsville,

MD. She plans to go to law school.



**Patrick Peralta**, 21, Government and Politics / Minor: Asian American Studies, University of Maryland College Park; son of Sunday and Carol Peralta of South Brunswick, New Jersey.



**Keona Sage Dela Rosa**, 17, Saint John Paul the Great, Graduated with Honors and played for the school volleyball team. Daughter of John and Lima Dela Rosa of Woodbridge, VA



ter of Kevin and Tina Simmons of Sterling, VA



**Tara Zokaie**, 22, Bachelor's in Business Administration with a minor in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences, George Washington University. Daughter of Severina Cinco Zokaie of Gandara, Samar PH and Roham Zokaie, originally from Iran.



**Jacob Matthew Simmons**, 14, River Bend Middle School, son of Kevin and Tina Simmons of Sterling, VA

**Brenna Francine Simmons**, 11, Algonkian Elementary School, daugh-



**Marilyn B. Ortega**, 21, Associate of Arts in Computer Science, Montgomery College, with her parents Cho and Louie Ortega of Boyd's MD. Marilyn graduated from Northwest High School and will be pursuing Immersive Media Design at the University of Maryland.

**Honor Roll**

**Johleen Calaro**, 32, daughter of Tony and Denia Bustamante Calaro of Silver Spring, is

the new President of Alpha Omega Alpha, a medical honor society at Howard College of medicine. A med student since 2018, Johleen wants to be a radiologist after she completes residency in the Fall. "I am honored to have been chosen," she says. "It's like fulfilling a life-long dream. I thank my parents for helping me achieve this level of success."



**Lorelei Bangit** of Jefferson High School in West Virginia recently won the 200- and 400-meter dashes, plus ran legs of the winning 4x100 and 4x200 relays, at The Journal/Hedgesville Eagles Track and Field Invitational and has been named as The Journal/Pivot Physical Therapy Athlete of the Week. She is the daughter of Raymond and Angie Bangit, and granddaughter of Elvi and Rey Bangit of Bristow, VA.



GRADUATION SHOWCASE ► NEXT PAGE



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## GRADUATION SHOWCASE

### From Page 9

Filipino-American Student Graduates take a lead in the "Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Cum Laude Awardee List" in different schools. Many of them graduated at the top of their class this year, proving their mettle by excelling in academics despite the pandemic challenges.

The Migrant Heritage Commission's (MHC) Youth Program recognizes high achievers and sends youth leader delegates to the World Youth Assembly at the United Nations every year. They will be honored again as "torch-bearers and trail-blazers" in the near future.

The following are among the academically outstanding students this year:

- **Mario "Nemo" Sto Domingo** – Summa Cum Laude – Bachelor of Arts in Government & Politics, University of Maryland College Park; Son of Mario and Leni Sto Domingo.
- **Lorenz Vargas** – Summa Cum Laude – Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs/ Asian & Japanese Studies, George Washington University, Son of Lory Nunez.
- **John Gadiana** – Summa Cum Laude, Northern Virginia Community College, son of Adela Silva.
- **Sharon Eusebio** – Magna Cum Laude – Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Virginia Commonwealth University, daughter of Malen Eusebio Becker.
- **Jan Kathleen P Reyes** – Magna Cum Laude – Bachelor of Fine Arts, Rutgers University, daughter of Joy Pablo and husband Mr. Reyes.
- **Kayla Tiller**, Cum Laude – George Washington University, daughter of Melanie PenalosaTiller and William "Bill" Nathaniel Tiller.

- **Craig Patrick Jocson** – Cum Laude, Virginia Commonwealth University - Business Information Systems, son of Jose Jocson and Elisa Fagar-Jocson.
- **Marie Patricio Gatchalian** – Cum Laude, Bachelor of Science in Human Biology, University of Southern California, daughter of Cesar and Suzanne Patricio Gatchalian.
- **Jessica Nicole Hargrove** – A-B Honor Roll – Mary Washington University, daughter of Dhel and Mr Hargrove.

Among those recognized in previous years are:

- **Aira Alfonso Valera** – Summa Cum Laude, Bachelor of Science in Family & Human Development, Arizona State University, 2019, daughter of April Alfonso and the late Nestor Valera.
- **Katherine Clough** – Summa Cum Laude, 2019 Miss Teen Philippines-America, daughter of Evelyn Talatala and Mr. Clough.
- **Angela Nicole Dizon** – Summa Cum Laude, Bachelor of Science in Financial Economics, daughter of Angelica

- and Mr. Dizon, (Angela – 2014 ISA's Miss Teen Philippines-America).
- **Nikkie Navarro** – 2018 Cum Laude, ISA's Miss Teen Philippines-Maharlika.
- **Noreen Navarro** – Cum Laude, Associate of Science in Nursing, Anne Arundel Community College, daughter of Susan and Nover Navarro (ISA's Miss Teen Philippines-Luzon).
- **Lurene Heyl** – Honor graduate, ISA's 2016 Miss Teen Philippines-America.
- **Charmaine Cabatuando** – Honor graduate, ISA's Miss Teen Philippines-Ambassador, daughter of Margie and Joseph Cabatuando.
- **Stephanie OralloThomson** – Honor graduate, ISA's Miss Teen Philippines-Luzon, daughter of Nida Orallo and Mr Thomson.
- **Chessa Taboada** – Special Academic Award, ISA's 2011 Miss Teen Philippines-America, daughter of Jun and Velma Taboada.
- **Kathleen Calaro** – Honor Graduate, 2009 Miss Teen Philippines-USA First Runner-up, daughter of Tony & Denia Calaro.



## VIRTUAL COOKING WITH EVELYN BUNOAN

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Cassava Patties with Grated Coconut (Pichi-Pichi)

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Evelyn Bunoan has been a longtime member of Les Dames d'Escoffier (<https://www.ldei.org/>), a women's culinary organization with twin missions: education and philanthropy. It's upcoming fundraiser, "Our Luscious Planet," will benefit Thrive DC's housing, job training, and meal programs for vulnerable women in Washington, D.C.

Evelyn I will be demonstrating a Filipino meal on Wednesday, June 23 at 7 p.m. ET.

- Buy a ticket(s) for any or all of the five-part online series of international cooking classes. Every class includes recommendations from fine beverage connoisseurs. also members of our chapter.
- Make a tax-deductible donation. For every \$5 you donate, you'll receive a thank-you gift of a raffle ticket. There are five super fun raffle baskets, each one filled with ingredients associated with the international cuisine of one of the five classes. At checkout, you can designate the raffle box that interests you.
- Spread the word, tell your friends, post the Eventbrite link on your social media pages.

Please support our missions by registering here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/our-luscious-planet-virtual-cooking-with-chefs-from-around-the-world-tickets-153555545771>

Looking forward to seeing you online!



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## Filipino Town: Right Here, Right Now

By **VOLTAIRE TRINIDAD**

*The author is a database developer for an analytics firm in Germantown, MD. He moved to the DMV area in 2006.*



**C**RAVING for some Asian food? No problem. There's a lot to choose from in the DMV area. In fact, there are even specialized areas where you can go and find food and services specific to one country.

Take for example Eden Center in Falls Church. It is a Vietnamese American strip mall in Falls Church with over 120 shops and businesses originally catering to the Vietnamese American population. Originally named Plaza Seven Shopping Center over 40 years ago, it has seen major transformation through the years with the renovation of the center and the addition of 32 thousand square foot space called Saigon West. On top of that new building sits a big clock tower which is an exact replica of the one in downtown Saigon. For the thousands of immigrants who settled in Washington DC metropolitan after the Vietnam War in 1975, this place is a reminder of home. Nowadays, it is popular even to non-Vietnamese, with locals bringing visiting friends and families there to sample authentic Vietnamese food. You can find several pho restaurants, Bahn mi delicatessens, bakeries, various small general stores, and a huge supermarket selling Vietnamese and other Asian products. Important cultural events such as Chinese New Year are also celebrated at the Center.

If you're searching for authentic Chinese food, a good place to head to is Washington D.C.'s Chinatown located in the historic area east of downtown Washington, D.C. Chinatown was originally established in the 1880's along the South side of Pennsylvania Avenue. Immigrants came hoping to find their fortune in America and return to China someday. In the 1930's, Chinatown moved from its original location to the downtown district where it is located today. The neighborhood is a mix of commercial, residential, religious, and government buildings. There are establishments such as restaurants, general stores, Chinese American cultural and religious charities and even a Chinese Community Church. There are approximately 20 Chinese and Asian restaurants, almost all owned by Asian American families. The area was once home to thousands of Chinese immigrants. Although that number has shrunk to a few hundred now, it is still a neighborhood that Chinese migrants and Chinese Americans can call their own.

Then there's Koreatown in Annandale which runs for 1.5 miles from the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Hummer Road to Evergreen Lane. Home to some of the 129 thousand Korean Americans in the region, this area has grown through the years. If you are craving for Korean food, you will have a hard time choosing from among some of the best Korean restaurants in DMV all located here. The area is home to more than a thousand Korean-owned businesses including accounting offices, spas, bakeries, restaurants, bookstores, karaoke bars, and Korean beauty stores.

This brings me to the question that has hounded me for years - why is there no Filipino center? According to Census Reporter (U.S. Census Bureau 2015-2019), there are more than 123,000 Filipinos in the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA CSA area. In the same survey, the Vietnamese population is smaller than ours at around 87,000 and yet, they have successfully built their own commercial/cultural center. Saying that there is not enough Filipinos in the area is not accurate then. The recent launch of Jollibee in Wheaton, MD and another planned opening in Alexandria, VA is undeniable proof that the market is big enough. I was told there were attempts through the years to create a Filipino center in the DMV area though for various reasons, they have never come to fruition.

I remember a conversation with a Vietnamese realtor more than a decade ago. She conveyed how envious she was of Filipinos in general because we are educated and mostly in professional or white-collar fields. Most newly migrated Vietnamese, she continued, are not fluent in English so it is usually challenging to find work. Thus, a lot of them have no choice but to start their own business. It seemed like a compliment, and I know she meant it as such, but at the same time, I have always wondered - does our ability to assimilate more quickly through our fluency or familiarity with the English language stifle any entrepreneurial spirit we may possess? Could it be that our Asian neighbors have more entrepreneurs borne out of desperation? Or maybe there is not enough community support. The Chinese and Vietnamese communities have been known to organize groups that provide financial and marketing support for immigrant families trying to establish their own business. Is it a matter of U.S. immigration policy? In recent decades, the U.S. government only allow immigrants from the Philippines who can find sponsored work in the country. And from that pool of immigrants, you will find doctors, nurses, accountants, teachers, and IT engineers but very few entrepreneurs. There seems to be significant barriers for Filipino immigrants to engage in entrepreneurship.

And yet, we find the likes of Precious Hiyas-Lopez, owner of Sew Magarbo, a sewing & creative arts studio in Ashburn, VA. She sells sewing machines and fabrics and offers workshops and classes for sewing and quilting. Judith Mitchell, who co-founded and manages Platinum Flooring, a flooring company in McLean, VA. Her company provides flooring services and offers a wide variety of styles and colors of Carpet, Hardwood, Luxury Vinyl Plank, Rubber and Sport Flooring. Tom Cunanan and Paolo Dungca, both formerly of Bad Saint, have opened Pogiboy in DC early this year. A straight-up homage to Jollibee, it offers its own version of smash burgers, fried chicken, and Pinoy spaghetti. Just based on the members of our own Philippine American Chamber of Commerce

(PACC-DC), we can find a number of Filipino-American entrepreneurs in the region. But for sure, there is room for much more.

Imagine a place where you can find fantastic regional Filipino restaurants and bakeries all in one place, a place where you can find your favorite Philippine snack food inside a grocery store, alongside "parols" (Philippine lanterns) you've always wanted to bring here but just couldn't fit in your suitcase. Imagine finding in one place a selection of forwarding companies for sending balikbayan boxes, or being able to walk in a Pinoy-owned accounting office to get help filing taxes, or getting financial advice from a licensed Filipino financial adviser, or meeting a realtor with whom you can be at ease, speak in your native tongue and know that you are being attended to by someone who understands your cultural background. Imagine a community center where the Filipino community can celebrate national and regional festivals and hold exhibits where Philippine products and services are being promoted. Visiting such a place can become a cultural experience for everyone, whether Filipino or not.

Filipino-American entrepreneurs can benefit from relocating their businesses to a Filipino center due to increased foot traffic and a highly targeted market. Hopefully, aspiring entrepreneurs who will get to know these Filipino-American owned and operated businesses will find inspiration and be encouraged to pursue their own endeavors. Such a place will also be beneficial to the Filipino-American community in general since we would have a place to congregate, build, and foster communities. More importantly, we will now have a place we can call our own - a place where we can bring our family and non-Filipino American friends to taste Filipino food and culture. And maybe at times, we may just want to visit a place that reminds us of home.

PACC-DC would like to build the foundation for such a center by spearheading the feasibility study and business plan development. From there, we hope to partner with the right people and institutions to carry this plan into fruition. But a united community is needed to build such a center. We need the support of the Filipino-American people in the DMV area to turn the dream of a Filipino center into a reality. So, ask yourself - what can I do to help make this happen?

Volunteers interested in being part of the initiative are most welcome to reach out to members of PACC-DC. What better way to show the spirit of Bayanihan by coming together to build this Filipino center, our very own Barangay.

*References:  
Eden Center - Wikipedia  
Mall Info | Eden Center  
Chinatown (Washington, D.C.) - Wikipedia  
Koreatown - Wikipedia  
Grid View: Table B02018 - Census Reporter*

### PACC-DC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 6, 2021, 12:00-4:00 p.m. EDT: **Philippine Independence Day celebration, Filipino Chefs at the DACHA Navy Yard**

June 25, 2021: **June Meet & Greet Networking Event, FB Virtual Watch Party for "Isang, Tinig, Isang Lahi" - a free concert to raise funds for those severely impacted by the pandemic**

### SAVE THE DATES

July 8 and 22, 2021 - Details to follow

# PNP agrees to open drug death files with DOJ

**M**ANILA. The Philippine National Police (PNP) has agreed to share its records of 61 incidents where drug suspects were killed after allegedly battling policemen that's been hailed as a breakthrough in ferreting out 7,884 drug-related deaths since 2016.

"What is significant is that the DOJ (Justice Department) has been given free access, something that did not happen in previous years, thereby making our review rather difficult," said Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra.

Mr. Guevarra caused a stir in his virtual report to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC) earlier this year when he revealed cops violated rules

of engagement in the death of over 2,800 drug suspects.

He later clarified that only 328 cases "were made available for the review". The disparity apparently stemmed from each case possibly involving several respondents as well as victims.

"The PNP will allow the DOJ access to records of 61 cases, involving hundreds of PNP personnel nationwide, where the



A woman wails over the dead body of her spouse, an alleged drug personality who was shot by cops during an anti-drug operation.

PNP Internal Affairs Service (IAS) had found administrative and/or criminal liability on the part of law enforcement agents," Mr. Guevarra explained.

The apparent change of heart follows the appointment of the new PNP Director General

Guillermo Eleazar.

"This could be a breakthrough," wrote Carlos Conde of Human Rights Watch (HRW) Philippines. He appointed to the seeming seriousness of the UNHRC and the hopeful change of tune

from Gen. Eleazar. Still, he believed the gestures were "tokenism" because of the enormity of the cost of Pres. Rodrigo Duterte's bloody "drug war".

"For human rights lawyers, this is a very slow pace," Mr. Conde wrote.

<b>MANNY PACQUIAO</b>		<b>V</b>	<b>ERROL SPENCE JR</b>	
42	AGE		31	
71	FIGHTS		27	
62	WON		27	
7	LOST		0	
2	DRAWN		0	
39	KNOCKOUTS		21	
<b>SOUTHPAW</b>	STANCE		<b>SOUTHPAW</b>	
<b>5FT 6IN</b>	HEIGHT		<b>5FT 9.5IN</b>	
<b>67IN</b>	REACH		<b>72IN</b>	
<b>PACMAN</b>	NICKNAME		<b>THE TRUTH</b>	
<b>FILIPINO</b>	NATIONALITY		<b>AMERICAN</b>	

## Pacquiao aims for glory, and possibly a shot at 2022

**M**ANILA. August 21 has always been a historic day for the Philippines – the bombing of Plaza Miranda in 1971 and the assassination of Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1983 – both shaped the country's trajectory decades into the future. Will the "Pambansang Kamao" Sen. Manny Pacquiao add another facet to that momentous day when he fights American champion Errol Spence Jr.?

Pacquiao is scheduled to meet the reigning World Boxing Council (WBC) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) title holder in Las Vegas, contesting the unified belt in the welterweight class where Mr. Spence is ranked no. 1 and Mr. Pacquiao, No. 3.

The 42-year-old Filipino sports legend is coming out of semi-retirement, his first professional bout since the split decision win over Keith Thurman in July 2019 to win the World Boxing Association (WBA) super championship.

He was stripped of his title for not defending it when the Covid 19 pandemic swept across the globe. It could be his biggest

fight since his defeat to Floyd Mayweather in 2015.

Mr. Spence is 11 years younger, hits hard and is over three inches taller than Mr. Pacquiao. Despite these advantages, many see even odds for the fight.

"Many expect Spence to walk away with the win by virtue of his size, youth, and laudable talent. Pacquiao, however, has his believers. Indeed, few, if any, feel the Filipino Senator doesn't stand any chance at all. Pacquiao has simply proven himself an enemy of father time too many times before," wrote Boxing Insider's Sean Crose.

Some kibbitzers say that Mr. Pacquiao has been crafty about choosing opponents where he can maximize his current skills and give audiences a memorable performance. The match will be held about eight months before the next national elections. It's an open secret that he aspires to be president, and Aug. 21 could be the springboard or cemetery for Pacquiao's ultimate dream.



## New PH-US forces accord now up to Duterte

**M**ANILA. The Philippine-United States Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) is now in the hands of the country's mercurial strongman who once tried to scrap it only to relent following an outcry by aides worried about China's steady encroachment in the Philippines.

Terms of the new VFA accord have been worked out by both sides and now submitted to Pres. Rodrigo Duterte, who's vowed to study it "very carefully".

The VFA, originally signed in 1998, sets the conditions for the American military deployed in the Philippines for a variety of missions, from calamity response to joint training exercises. Losing the deal would remove legal protections for US troops and the US State Department has said it's ready to withdraw troops totally from the Philippines if that happens.

Mr. Duterte abruptly canceled the VFA last year over a dust-up over the cancellation of US visas of key political allies in Congress, but settled instead on stop-gap six-month extensions while renegotiation was pursued.

The State Department previously told Congress it would need to immediately start moving US forces out of the country before an August deadline if talks were unsuccessful. The administration of Pres.

Joe Biden left off the Philippines in a list of US allies last March, although the US has a seven-decade old Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) with the Philippines, a one-time colony and one of only two military alliances the US has in Southeast Asia.

The two countries also have the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), signed in 2014, that allows US forces to access Philippine military bases through rotational deployments.

Some have questioned the Philippines' reliability as an alliance partner – in the past decade, the US has provided more military aid to the Philippine military – in 2017, that amounted to \$61.3 million, compared to its other Southeast Asian ally Thailand which only got \$3.4 million. In 2019, the Philippines devoted less than one percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to defense, reinforcing the view by some in Washington that it was still relying too much on the US military.

Vice Pres. Leni Robredo said it was time the Philippines embraced a multilateral approach to resolving the territorial dispute with China in the West Philippine Sea. "We should push for multilateral talks, not only with China and the Philippines but with other countries that share our issue, and have the same concern," she averred.

# PH vaccine drive hits snag

**M**ANILA. The challenge of vaccine hesitancy took an added face after many Filipinos expressed a preference for certain Covid 19 vaccines. The Health Department (DOH) has asked local governments to hold off from announcing which vaccine they were administering, sparking a debate over the public's right to know.

The apparent bias became evident when hundreds of people lined up at a site in Manila – the only one out of 20 vaccination sites in the city – that had the Pfizer vaccine.

The DOH has since ordered that only people already in line at a vaccination site will be told which shot they'll get, revealed Undersecretary Myrna Cabotaje.

China's Sinovac vaccine, which has an efficacy of about 67 percent makes up the bulk of the doses available in the Philippines. Only about 200,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine – with an efficacy of 95 percent – are available.

The people's anxiety is fueled in part by the hysteria triggered by the convoluted roll-out of the DengVaxia anti-dengue vaccine in 2016. It's been blamed for a lingering distrust of vaccines, aggravated by government's poor messaging as well as rampant misinformation and growing anger against China.

Washington is set to deliver more Covid 19 vaccines through the World Health Organization-run COVAX facility in the coming weeks, said Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel Romualdez.

"Actually, they're beginning to put it together. From what I understand, perhaps as early as second week of June. They should be expecting some of the vaccines will be going to the Philippines," Mr. Romualdez



said in a CNN Philippines interview.

The US is apportioning some 80 million doses of the Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines in the US stockpile to different countries.

The Philippines may be given about two million more doses of AstraZeneca, in addition to the 2.2 million Pfizer vaccine doses arriving in late May. About 300,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine are expected to arrive by June 21, Mr. Romualdez added.

The government is also working to acquire 40 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine through the COVAX facility although it wasn't clear how or who would pay for them.

Mr. Romualdez said he was working with Philippine vaccine czar Carlito Galvez to procure five million doses of the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine that could be delivered in August or September.

Up to 70 million Filipinos must be vaccinated by the end of the year to achieve herd immunity, crucial to the country's economic recovery.



Workers rendered jobless by the Covid-19 pandemic in the Philippines are reduced to begging for alms on the streets.

## PH recovery could lag behind rest of Asia

**M**ANILA. The Covid 19 pandemic has dislocated most Southeast Asian economies but as vaccines fuel recovery, the Philippines risks being left behind because of major mistakes it committed, experts say.

Bloomberg's Siegfried Alegado and Andreo Calanzo said the pandemic unmasked "structural weaknesses...including a decentralized health-care system and rampant inequality" in the Philippine government's Covid 19 response strategy.

They pointed to strict lockdowns that tamped down the virus' spread only to re-appear weeks later. Local governments were left to manage the pandemic response individually and the vaccination roll-out is slow – observers estimate the government will only be able to vaccinate 20-25 percent of the population, compared to its target of 50 percent, by the end of 2021.

The Philippine economy shrank by more than expected in the first quarter of 2021. Gross domestic product (GDP)

declined 4.2 percent during the period compared to the same time last year, marking the 5th straight quarter of declines amid pandemic-induced lockdowns. A Reuters poll projected a further three percent contraction by the end of the year.

"Recent lockdowns are expected to shave off momentum from the economic recovery and weigh on the services sector the most, with personal services not allowed to operate due to social distancing regulations," said Moody's Analytics associate economist Eric Chiang in a market analysis.

Despite economic activity slowing down anew in the first quarter of 2021, Economic Planning (NEDA) Sec. Karl Kendrick Chua is still optimistic of attaining the 6.5 to 7.5 percent GDP goal they set for full-year economic growth.

However, Moody Analytics revised its previous forecast of 6.2 percent for 2021 to 5.3 percent, reinforcing the country's status as "regional laggard".

In the meantime, the gov-

ernment is working to regain some of the old zing in the economy. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) for instance wants to increase the cap in the overseas deployment of nurses. The task force overseeing the government's pandemic response has set a 5,000 cap for nurses deployed abroad, but it's already hit 3,000 after just four months.

"We remain hopeful that as we manage the risks, we open the economy safely, implement the recovery program and accelerate the vaccine (drive), we are still able to achieve the targeted growth rate only if we work together," said Mr. Chua.

Still, the Philippine economy is not expected to recover to its pre-pandemic level until the end of 2022, said Moody's Katrina Ell, compared to China, Taiwan and Vietnam that have already returned to previous levels and South Korea, Indonesia and Thailand that are expected to hurdle that threshold this year.

## WHERE

### From Page 6

other seven years to get healed from the trauma that he suffered. Farming helped him a lot in coping with his pain.

Jolly Villa lives in Pahala, Hawaii, and is an Educational Assistant at Ka'u High & Pahala Elementary School.

## Time Flies

By **AGUSTIN and IMELDA SABELINO**

**O**UR FATHER, Conrado S. Sabelino, was a simple and humble family man who loved his country dearly. He fought bravely with the Americans despite lack of munitions and supplies. When his comrades were forced to surrender in Bataan, he escaped to the jungles of Luzon and continued to fight with guerrilla forces. They ambushed and sabotaged enemy encampments, and engaged in



**CONRADO S. SABELINO**

intelligence gathering and surveillance that later helped liberate the Philippines.

After the war, he taught at the Philippine Military Academy, and later served as the Army Attaché in Washington DC. He retired in his beloved birthplace in Ormoc City, Leyte until his death on January 3, 1987.

When Super typhoon Haiyan hit Leyte in 2013, many homes were destroyed including our own. We lost photo albums and family records, including those

of our dad's.

In October 2018, we accepted our father's Congressional Gold Medal Award on behalf of our family. The lack of recognition for more than 70 years was painful. But we will always honor his service and sacrifice and treasure the stories he left behind.

*Agustin Sabelino is the eldest of five siblings and lives in Huntington Beach, CA. with his wife, Irene, and son Leo. Imelda lives in Washington, D.C. and her career includes stints at the World Bank/IMF, White House and the Kennedy Center.*

## Learning Responsibility and Discipline

By **PETE SARMIENTO**

**M**Y DAD was born in a little barrio of Mayapyap, Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija on July 23, 1906. When he was 19 years old, he got bored

with barrio life and decided to enlist in the Philippine Scouts. He earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart medal.

Training with combat engineers at Fort McKinley was a turning point in his life. He learned how to make topographical surveys and gained a detailed knowledge of the mountainous areas in the islands. This later proved invaluable when the Scouts tried to



**CAPT. PEDRO SARMIENTO**

escape guerrilla-hunting Japanese soldiers. To protect his family, he made sure we evacuated to the jungles of Tayabas where my Uncle helped hide us.

Dad was a Prisoner of War after Bataan and Corregidor fell. He survived and raised a family. I was the first among seven children. When we were growing up, he would take us to Fort McKinley during the Christmas season to enjoy the festivities. Later, he was assigned company commander of an MP unit in Baclaran. I started high school in 1946 and became responsible for myself, an experience I learned from my dad. He taught me discipline and responsibility.

We left the Philippines for the US in July 1950 after the Philippines Scout Division was disbanded. I thank him for taking the entire family to the US.

*Pete Sarmiento of Ft. Washington, MD. has served as a docent at the National Air and Space Museum for nearly 40 years.*

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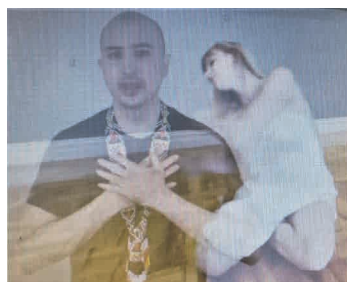
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### Kung Fu Tea, Anyone?

Owners of a new franchise, Kung Fu Tea, a popular Boba Tea beverage, from left, Adrian and Ailene Subido, Lima and John De La Rosa welcome tea lovers at their location on 4160 Merchant Plaza, Woodbridge, VA. PHOTO BY BING BRANIGIN



### Operahouse Without Walls

In celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, sensational tenor Allan Palacios Chan introduces the INVISION Series audience to "Kundiman" - traditional Filipino art song - in an extraordinary collaboration with dancer Lesley Garrison and choreographer Billy Smith, both of the Mark Morris Dance Group and multi-talented pianist and cinematographer Emily Mason. The event, held on Zoom on May 14, featured Allan singing Nicanor Abelardo's "Mutya ng Pasig." A translation from the lyrics: "My strength was transferred to the hearts and bosoms of all...if you wish for me to live, share my love."



### Sworn to Duty

James Wade, VFW Maryland Senior Vice Commander, installs the officers of VFW POST 5471 on May 2: Rey Regis, Commander; Andy Miranda, Senior Vice Commander; Samuel Drummond, Junior Vice Commander; Dominador Carreon, Quartermaster; Luisito Maligat, Adjutant; Lorna Mae Devera, Chaplain; Trustees: Eric Harbison, Jay Cabacar, John Eda; Michael Sera, Service Officer; Pete Sarmiento, Judge Advocate General; Hilario Loyola, Surgeon General; Fred Bravo, Officer of the Day; Senior Advisors: Ray Cabacar and Antonio Taguba. The installation, followed by a family picnic, was held at the Bolling Air Force Base in Anacostia.



### Santa Cruzan in Silver Spring

Parishioners of the Fil-Am of St Michael the Archangel and Rev. Father Art Malliari during the May celebration of Santa Cruzan (Flores de Mayo) in Silver Spring, MD. It was also a celebration of the Ascension of Christ in Heaven and Mother's day. PHOTO BY MERLINDA WEBER



### Nurses on Duty

Linda Filamor Cabacar of Springfield, VA, and members of the Philippine Nurses Association (PNAMDC) never miss an opportunity to volunteer their services - especially for the Bataan Memorial Death March (BMDM), whether at White Sands, NM or in Mt. Vernon, VA, where more than 25 members of the community walked 14.2 miles along the Potomac River on April 17, in a local version of BMDM, sponsored by FilVetREP.



### Ready to Serve

Inducted on May 2 are officers of the VFW Auxiliary 5471: Lera Rickling, President; Zeny Viloria, Senior Vice President; Nannette Carreon, Junior Vice President; Mary Cabiao, Secretary/Treasurer; Mamie Curameng, Chaplain; Esther Fojas, Conduress; Yholee Collins, Guard; Trustees: Linda Cabacar, Merlyn Eda & Dolly Regis.



### 'A Milestone'

Franz and Jhett Arzadon Epp of Falls Church, VA, and their sons Alexander and Jonathan, celebrate their parents' 25th wedding anniversary on May 29. "Marriage is hard," Jhett told the gathered family and friends. "But you try to make sacrifices. Do the best you can. For the good of the family. And then you look back and did I make the right choice? Absolutely. I have two amazing sons, and a loving husband. After 25 years, I have learned to just say namaste, stay calm, it will be what it is tomorrow, and it will all turn out beautiful."

### A Graduation Gig

Matthew's Grill was the perfect setting for family and friends of Kayla Tiller of Burtonsville, MD. (center in white), who dined and danced on May 29 to celebrate her graduation from GW (see Our Town, p. 29). Her parents, Melanie and Bill Tiller and close friend Larry and MaryLou Jackson hosted the event.







### A Timely Partnership

The Philippine Embassy and the National Filipino American Lawyers Assoc. (NFALA) signed a Memorandum of Agreement on May 17 designed to assist newly-arrived Filipinos in the US, notably OFWs, about their legal rights and issues related to legal representation. Affirming the MOU are, from right, NFALA Exec. Sec. Bryan Ramos, NFALA Pres. Elect Jeri Abrams, NFALA President Kristy Gonowon, Ambassador Jose Manuel G. Romualdez, Consul General JV Chan, and Vice Consul Mylene. PHOTO BY BING BRANIGIN.



### Giving their best shots

Michael San Juan (center in blue) of Medspack Pharmacy headed a vaccination drive early this year in the DMV area with the medical & non-medical volunteers and nurses from the Philippine Nurses Association (PNAMDC) led by Christine Garcia-Pabico. Volunteers from the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce (PACC-DC) also helped distribute Love Sweatshop Masks. PHOTO COURTESY OF JOYCE PUNO



### Jollibee Opens

The much-awaited opening of JOLLIBEE in Wheaton's Westfield Mall on April 8 drew hundreds of customers from the region, who are delighted they don't have to drive all the way to Virginia Beach anymore to feast on Chicken Joy and other unique meals. Among the early birds is Ilyn Gogolin, who lived about a mile away. "It reminds me of home," she says, with a sense of nostalgia. Another Jollibee is slated to open in Alexandria next year.



### Kaliwa's Pride

Julie Cortes, 27, brings a touch of Paranaque where she grew up to Kaliwa restaurant's menu at The Wharf, which is owned by Irish Executive Chef and restaurateur, Cathal Armstrong and FilAm Meshelle Armstrong.



### 'From the Earth'

Art pieces by DMV-based Ceramic Artist Hadrian Mendoza – seen here at the opening with Consul General Jose JV Chan and Kim Dacanay Mendoza – are currently on exhibit at the Zenith Gallery in Washington, DC. through June 30.



### A Taste of Southern Tagalog

The owners of Bistro Manila, which recently opened in 308 Worth Ave., Stafford, VA., are from left Romichelle and Vincent Elejido, Eric and Beverly Escueta. Chef Virma Mayo leads the Batangas and Laguna team in the kitchen They have recreated a few Filipino favorites such as Bulalo, Bopis and Pansit Palabol. PHOTO BY BING BRANIGIN



### The Dancing Queen's 50th

Rita Manalo Hammond (left) of Potomac, MD, finally got to celebrate her 50th birthday on May 17 with her family, from left, daughter Paula Mae, her fiancé Brandon, youngest daughter Patricia Ann, eldest daughter Marie Pierre and her husband Ace Emerson, and Rita's husband Peter. "Technically, I'm still 50," says the celebrant, a certified nursing assistant who grew up in Bacolor, Pampanga and came to the US in 2005. With DJ Pacman pumping up the music at Evolution Danz, guests opened with the Viennese Waltz with the Hustle as the finale. "Everybody danced all night long and had a good time," she says – thanks to unlimited drinks at an open bar.



### A Weekend Workout

For the past 25 years, the Virginia Beach-based Filipino American Community Action Group (FilAmCAG) maintains the Salem Middle School garden. On a recent weekend, they brought their own garden tools and cleaning equipment, bags of soil and mulch, and new plants to spruce up the place before school opens. FilAmCAG volunteers include Bert and Medy Dayao, Nony and Linda Abrajano, Jun and Evelyn Sandoval, Nardo and Merlyn Tengco, Gil Zulueta. Other officers, Linda Lazo, Laarni Bibay, Ritchie Santander, Isabella Cabacan, Pepe Cabacoy, Nora Dorsey, Romy Manosa, Gene, Bariso, Andy Lazo, Jay Manglicmot, Bert Caboteja, Norie Hoff, Mark Cristand Tessie Balatbat.



### 'We are Family'

Maynilad Lodge number 1521 held their 10-year Anniversary Celebrations at the residence of Ador and Nanette Carreon in Oxon Hill, MD. on May 15. They feasted on Pinoy favorite pot luck food and entertained themselves with music and dance. PHOTO BY BING BRANIGIN

### Meet Mrs. Washington, D.C.

On her way to winning Mrs. Philippines World 2021 is Melanie Dua of Bristow, VA. representing Washington DC. Married to Tito Dua for 34 years, the mother of three young adult children studied Early Childhood Education at Central Texas College and is the Manpower Coordinator at DeWitt Health Care Network. "I want to encourage women of all ages, all races, all creeds, all cultures, all economic levels to do anything they passionately believe in," she says.



### Darell's Despedida

Friends bade farewell to Public Diplomacy Office Darell Artates (2nd from right) at a lunch in Purple Patch on April 21. Community leaders regard her 6-year stint at the Philippine Embassy as highly productive and remarkably professional, notably the cultural arts programs she co-sponsored with FilAm organizations. Allan Palacios Chan serenaded Darell with kundimans and arias from famous operas like Puccini's Nessun dorma, pleasantly surprising all the diners.

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# A Father's Best Gift

**F**ILIPINO-American community leader and entrepreneur Carl Abella, 70, of Bethesda, MD, knew about grief and loss when, at age 16, he lost his mother from ovarian cancer.



By **JOSIE MORALIDAD ZIMAN**

Carl has one sister from their parents' first marriage. After their parents divorced and remarried other spouses, Carl and her sister gained four siblings on the mother's side and four on the father's side. From then on, Carl's life has never been the same with a broken family and a

ailing mother who could not take care of them.

It was a very difficult period for Carl. Growing up homeless in the streets of Manila and enduring lots of pain. Street delinquency, hard drinking, sleepless nights in jail. He wondered where to find a place to sleep and where the next meal would come from. All of this trauma hasn't been easy to erase from his mind.

"I ran away and lived on the street," Carl recalls. "It was very difficult leaving home. As a teenager, I was so envious of other kids who seem to have everything. The hardest thing was to find the basic needs to survive. I would not wish that kind of life on anyone. It was a daily struggle to find food and shelter every day. The moment I enjoyed most was being asleep."

In 1969, Carl arrived in America as a "TNT" (Tago ng Tago), a term for undocumented immigrants. Through the help of friends, he was able to get a tourist visa. One of them became a mentor and told him that to survive in America, he has to always think positive.

With that attitude, he walked all over Washington DC knocking on doors for any job. He got one as a janitor and maintenance man. Working at night, he was able to go to school during the day. With courage and determination Carl was able to graduate with a Master's Degree in Business Administration from George Washington University. And with honors. After graduation, he got a job as a controller for a large travel agency in Washington D.C. From there, he learned the dynamics of the business and several years later he started his own travel agency. "My best accomplishment is getting an education, which I never thought would ever happen," he says.

One of the best decisions Carl also made in his life was getting married and raising a family. Being a husband and having children was his most defining moment. He considered the responsibility and commitment to his family the time when a man grows up to be a man.

However, things happened that he can't even control. The separation from his children was very agonizing and had a prolonged effect in his life after divorcing his first wife. "Losing custody of the children felt like I died," he says. "Suddenly I was alone. I was happily married with the children then in a splash it was gone. I found myself living alone again. This was devastating to me."

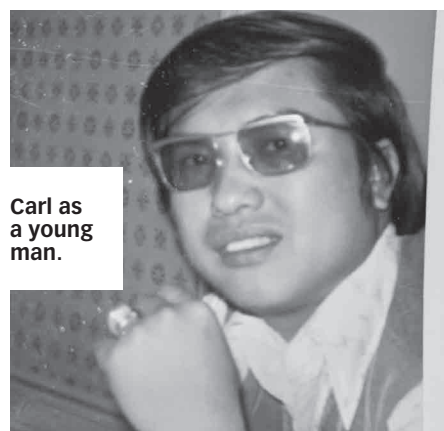
But joy followed sadness when Carl fell in love with Jeannette Abella, a nurse whom he met from one of the Filipino Christmas parties. "When I saw Jeannette, I was hesitant to approach her," he recalls. "However, I noticed she didn't know many people in the crowd. I tried to approach her, but she suddenly disappeared in another room. I waited till she came out and I asked for her telephone number which she reluctantly gave. The rest is history."

Now, with wife Jeannette on his side,

*It was a daily struggle to find food and shelter every day. The moment I enjoyed most was being asleep.*

Carl is thankful for everything. She understands and loves him unconditionally and his relationships now with his children is stronger and happier than ever before. He gives his children equal love. He gives them the space they needed growing up and provides all the things they need as children.

To Carl, the best gift a father can



Carl as a young man.



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## Theodore Sanchez Gonzalves, Ph.D.

**T**HE tag Ph.D. after his name tells everything about Theodore S. Gonzalves. In the academic discipline, he is a Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Culture, concentrating on American Studies, which he earned in 2001 at the University of California at Irvine. His Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Political Science earned earlier pushed him to that position of authority.

At present, Gonzalves is the Interim Director of the Asian Pacific American Center and Curator of Asian Pacific American history, both at the Smithsonian Institution. He was the Department Chair in American Studies at the University of Maryland in Baltimore County for eight years and at the University of Hawaii at Minoa for four years.

Gonzalves was the recipient of Fellowships, Awards and Grants, including the Florence Tan Moeson Fellow at the Library of Congress and Meet the Composer Award by the New York City. He authored and co-authored published books on musical performances, including "The Day the Dancers Stayed: Performing in the Filipino/American Diaspora."

As a peer in cultural studies, he has reviewed published articles in several academic journals, including the Journal of Popular Music Studies, CUNY Forum 4, The Asian American Literary Review, Kritika Kultura, and the Amerasia Journal; and chapters in published books, such as "Red Door: Beautiful



### DIRECT TALK

By **GLORIA MARIA T. FEDERIGAN**



**THEODORE SANCHEZ GONZALVES**

ful Studio," "Document 1101," "Theaters of Operation: Theorizing Filipino American Performance, National Identity and Community," and "On the Politics of (Filipino) Youth Culture."

Gonzalves is also serving as member of the editorial board for the Alon: Journal of Filipino American and Diasporic Studies, The American Journal, and Plaridel: A Journal of Communication Media and Society.

**Q. Your Biodata appears overwhelming—scholar of**

**cultural studies, curator, author and publisher, musical producer and performer, and graduate-level university professor—which one of these attributes would you like to be remembered for posterity?**

**A.** I think of myself as someone who has been actively involved in the cultural and intellectual life of Asian America and Filipino America. I've been fortunate to learn from a network of educators, scholars, and artists.

**Q. Per Margaret Mead, systematic patterns of behavior are transferred from parents to off springs—generations to generations—what Filipino cultural traits do you think would forever survive among Filipino Americans living in the United States and elsewhere in the globe?**

**A.** I prize Filipino and Filipino American traditions and repertoire that speak to improvisation, experimentation, adaptation, and change.

**Q. Filipino Americans are grouped with Asian migrants for political and other expediences, how do you think Filipino Americans in Hawaii should be classified?**

**A.** Asian America is more than merely a coalition built for political expedience. The premise of that historical form of pan-ethnicity is defined by solidarity. Yes, Asian ethnic groups in the United States have struck out on their own, and sometimes, in conflict with each other.

er. But the historical record reveals a long tradition of groups and individuals of various Asian ethnicities standing up for and with each other. That experience is reflected in the historical circumstances of Filipinos in Hawaii. The added layer there involves the fact that Filipinos in Hawaii are also Asian settlers on a colonially-appropriated land.

**Q. The easy accessibility to information is wrought by the forever advancing changes in technology, what is your opinion about the long-term survivability of the so-called "Filipinos' way-of-life"?**

**A.** Technology certainly has a way of homogenizing all sorts of things, from the kinds of music we consume to the way we speak and interact with each other. But those same communications networks also have the ability to facilitate difference, specificity, and uniqueness. Rodgers and Hammerstein had it right in [the musical] "Carousel." – "As long as there is one person on earth who remembers you, it isn't over."

**Q. If you were a betting man, what are the odds of Filipinos to be the migrants to the Moon?**

**A.** The Moon's old hat! [View] <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/2/19/nasa-mars-perseverance/rover-filipino-american.html>.

**Q. Who and what inspired you to excel in academics and extra-curricular activities throughout your academic life?**

**A.** My parents were my first teachers. Both of my parents didn't have extensive academic training. They taught me the difference between having a degree and being educated. If I did the work, the institution would have to give the degree; that's the transaction that demands discipline. But getting an education is something that doesn't stop with earning the degree. For my parents, an educated person was someone who was open and curious.

**Q. When you look at yourself in the mirror, what do you see?**

**A.** Someone who's late for a Zoom meeting!

**Q. What was the last book you have read and how extensive is your personal library?**

**A.** It was Vernadette Vicuna Gonzales' Empire's Mistress, Starring Isabel Rosario Cooper. I have two speeds when reading: incredibly fast or painfully slow. I read slowly for work. I interviewed Gonzales, who was a former colleague of mine at the University of Hawaii at Manoa about the release of her new book, which is about a dynamic figure in Philippine film history. I worked as a university professor for nearly 30 years. I have an extensive library. Moving is a pain because of the number of books I have.

**Theodore S. Gonzalves was born in Fort Ord, California. He last visited the Philippines in December 2017.**

## Jennifer Buen Luna: From Denial to Defiance

**T**HIRTY-nine-year old cancer victim Jenifer Buen Luna of Gaithersburg, MD learned how to be brave by entering the cancer trial with the unwavering support of her family and friends. She especially relied on her husband Gomer Luna, while keeping her faith in God.

It was December 2020 when Jennifer felt a lump on her right breast. She thought it was only an ordinary cyst that usually comes when a woman has a period. She thought it would eventually disappear.

But on January 21, 2021, she realized it was getting bigger. "During that time, my son kept telling me to go see a doctor," she recalls. "I thought he wanted to see a doctor since he and his sisters were due for their yearly check-up. Then when my period was over, the lump didn't go away, so I decided to get a mammogram. They found out there was an abnormality in the biopsy, and they said, 'it's cancer.'"

Jenifer learned about her diagnosis on March 5, 2021 which is a stage 2 invasive ductal



**Jennifer and Gomer Luna and their children Alonzo, 4, Mayumi, 13, and Aleeyah, 5.**

carcinoma. Feeling a sense of dread about losing her health, she was in denial when she got the devastating news that spring day. It was one of the worst moments in her life, but she needed to be strong for her husband and three kids. She wants to see them grow.

The breast cancer was in both breasts, but it didn't spread to her lymph nodes.

Born and raised in Laguna, Philippines, Jenifer was always healthy, with no history of cancer in the family. She is the first one to be diagnosed and she's incredibly surprised she got the

horrendous disease. She underwent a double mastectomy last April 2021. Luckily, she doesn't need to undergo chemotherapy but will be on hormone therapy for several years. She is now slowly recovering from the surgery, with a positive attitude. "I don't think about the sickness

at all," she says. "I always say I don't want to get stressed just because I'm sick. I told my family and friends that no one should cry in front of me. I also joined a bible study. Hearing God's word keeps me going. I always think that God gives a battle to His strongest warrior. I don't blame Him for giving me this illness. I learned how to be patient, I learned that you must value your time. Don't waste it, explore and enjoy your life with your family. After this cancer battle, I know I can face anything in the world without breaking down."

According to American Cancer Society, 1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime and the Philippine Society of Medical Oncology and Philippine Statistics Authority reported that Philippines has the highest breast cancer rate among Asian countries. Three out of 100 Filipino women will get breast cancer before age 75. Since 1980, breast cancer ranks among the top leading cancers afflicting women in the Philippines.

Jenifer is one of the beneficiaries of the Filipino American Cancer Care Hope for Cancer Journey Summer Event, scheduled for May 19. (See Page 22). She encourages everyone in the community to come out and show their support.



By **JOSIE MORALIDAD ZIMAN**

EVELYN'S KITCHEN

By EVELYN S. BUNOAN



# Sapin-Sapin

(Multi-layered Steamed Cake)



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

ALL PHOTOS BY EVELYN S. BUNOAN

AS REQUESTED by some readers, here is the recipe and procedures for sapin-sapin. Sapin-sapin is layered glutinous steamed cake. It is a unique and delicious Filipino dessert to enjoy by yourself or with friends. Time and patience is what it takes to obtain the perfect old-fashioned taste and elegant-looking sapin-sapin.

Serves 8-10 people

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 cup rice flour
- 1/2 cup glutinous rice flour
- 1 cup tapioca flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 can coconut milk
- 2 cups water
- 1/8 teaspoon ube (purple yam) extract or 1/4 teaspoon for darker color, if preferred
- 1/8 teaspoon yellow food coloring

For the crunchy coconut sprinkle (buddob):

- 1 cup frozen grated coconut (defrosted)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar

**Needed:** One 9-inch round aluminum pan, greased

Preheat oven to 375°F. Add 2 cups of water to a deep pan larger than a 9-inch round aluminum pan. This will serve as

the steamer pan.

Combine and whisk the rice flour, glutinous rice flour, tapioca flour and sugar. Add the coconut milk and water; mix well. Divide the mixture in the following order as shown in figure 1: 2 cups for white mixture; 1 cup for the ube mixture; and 2 cups for yellow mixture.

Pour the white mixture into the 9-inch round pan and place in the steamer pan

(figure 2). Steam for approximately 15-20 minutes or until the mixture is set and the top of the first layer is very dry.

Next, add the ube mixture on top of the white layer and steam again for another 15-20 minutes or until set and the top of the second layer is very dry. (Make sure to check after 15 minutes.) At this point, add 1 more cup of water to the steamer pan.

Add the yellow mixture (third layer) on top of the second layer and steam again for another 15-20 minutes or a little longer (additional 5 minutes). When the third layer is completely set and dry, remove the sapin-sapin and put in a cake rack. Let it cool for 2 to 3 hours before slicing.

To cook the crunchy coconut sprinkle: Combine and mix well the coconut and sug-

ar. On medium heat, stir-fry the coconut-sugar in a non-stick frying pan, while mixing constantly, until golden brown and crunchy (about 8 to 10 minutes) – see figure 3. Let cool and serve as sprinkle for the sapin-sapin or serve in a separate bowl for the guests to serve themselves (figure 4).

**(Chef's tip:** Sapin-sapin is best for slicing when cooled overnight.)

**Editor's Note:** Master Chef Evelyn: 100 Most Influential Filipina Women in the U.S., 2009, Filipina Women's Network; MHC Most Outstanding Migrant Award in Culinary Arts, 2011; PAFC Dakila Special Achievement Award, 2011; Owner/Chef, Philippine Oriental Market & Deli, Arlington, Virginia; Founder and President of CHEW (Cancer Help – Eat Well) Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) public charity formed to help and cook pro-bono for Filipino-Americans who are afflicted with cancer and other serious illnesses; Food Critic; Culinary writer; Food Columnist for Manila Mail, a fortnightly newspaper in the tri-state--Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Virginia; Member, Les Dames d'Escoffier International, Washington DC Chapter; Member, Culinary Historians of Washington, D.C.; Master Chief, French Cuisine and Patisserie, Le Cordon Bleu, London.

## Jokes

A collection of jokes and funny stories gathered from emails, friends, and memory. Some clean, some not so clean, and some really green. Proceed at your own risk.

**Say What?**

**A** WOMAN is a person who, if she says to a man, "Never mind, I'll do it myself," and he lets her, then she gets mad, and he says, "Now what are you mad about?" She says, "If you don't know, I'm not going to tell you."

**When, Oh, When**

**Wife:** Darling, when did you find out that you loved me?  
**Husband:** Shortly after I learned that I was crazy.

**Failure**

**John:** Both my marriages are failures.

**Simon:** Why?  
**John:** My first wife left me just because of a little disagreement.

**Simon:** And your second?  
**John:** My second wife and I are always having big fights, but until now she refuses to leave me.

**Why?**

**Karl:** Why did you give food to a tramp who you don't know? He did not do anything for you!  
**Cindy:** No reason. It's just a pleasure to have my cooking appreciated for a change.

**In Agreement**

**John:** I hear your wife is very headstrong. Is it difficult living with her?  
**Steve:** Not really. That's because I'm a very agreeable guy.  
**John:** How so?  
**Steve:** When we have the same opinions, she listens to me. When we have different opinions, I listen to her.

**Life After Marriage**

**Wally:** Darling, let's discuss our life after we get married. Would you like to be the President or General Manager?  
**Diane:** Oh, darling, I really don't deserve to be those.

However, I think I can qualify in a very small role.

**Wally:** What role is that?  
**Diane:** As a Financial Officer.

**Happy Anniversary**

**Susan:** Happy Anniversary, Babes.  
**Carlos:** Happy anniversary too baby ko... I love you.  
**Susan:** I love you, too.  
**Carlos:** I have a surprise for you.  
**Susan:** Really, babes?  
**Carlos:** Nakikita mo ba yung nakapark na kotse dun?  
**Susan:** Oo, nakikita ko. Thank you, baby ko. Excited na ako.  
**Carlos:** Ibinili kasi kita ng ganyang kulay ng tsinelas.

**Promotion**

**Judge:** Ikaw na naman! Sampung taon ka nang dito humaharap sa korte ko, ha?  
**Swindler:** Your honor, hindi ko



Compiled By OSCAR S. BUNOAN



na kasalanan kung hindi po kayo ma-promote-promote.

**Hide and Seek**

**Diane:** Hide and seek tayo. If you find me, papayag akong makipag-sex sa 'yo.  
**Charlie:** Eh, kung di kita makita?  
**Diane:** Nasa likod lang ako ng piano...

**Etsetera**

**Pulis:** Tootoo bang ikaw ang nagnakaw ng TV, alahas, pera, etsetera?  
**Magnanakaw:** Opo sir... inaamin ko po na ako ng nagnakaw ng lahat na yun, pero yung

etsetera, hindi po ako ang nagnakaw nun.

**Gloves**

**Pedro:** Juan, bakit kapag nag-oopera ang mga doktor, nagsusuot sila lagi ng gloves?  
**Juan:** Tanga ka ba? Siyempre, kapag namatay yung pasyente, wala silang finger prints!

**Ihing-ihing**

**Kulas:** Pare, nangyari na ba sa 'yo... nag bibiyahe ka tapos ihing-ihing ka na. Naghanap ka ng rest area. Pagpasok mo sa restroom ang haba ng pila. Halos puputok na ang pantog mo. Nang ikaw na, ayun... hayyy ang sarap ang pakiramdam.  
**Jose:** Ay oo, pare... mada-las. Pag dinadadalaw namin ang anak naming nasa college.  
**Kulas:** Pagkatapos bigla kang magising...  
**Jose:** Ay, engot!

# Fil-Am Cancer Group Receives Multiple Grants

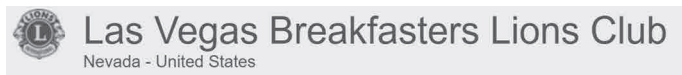
CANCER patients undergoing treatment frequently require assistance getting to and from facilities, often creating a financial and logistical burden. For it's impact to the cancer community, the Filipino American Cancer Care (FACC) is proud for being recipients of multiple grants from various organizations in the US.

The Las Vegas Breakfasters Lions Club recently awarded a \$2,185.00 seed money grant to FACC's cancer advocacy both in the Philippines and US because of the continuous impact of COVID19 pandemic on newly-formed cancer organizations trying to raise funds. Kristen Velasquez, President, 2019-2021 LV Breakfasters Lions Club and former PDG Lions Josie Harrison recommended FACC to their board. FACC received the second grant award through the Dollars For Doers Program of the Navy Federal Credit Union (NFCU) Awards to Non-Profits Across the US Charities. The program awards 100 non-profits with \$1,000 grants based upon nominations from employee volunteers. Since the inception of the program, Navy Federal has donated over \$750,000 to organizations in the communities where its employees live and serve. Beth Mendoza, a Navy Federal Credit Union employee, a long-time Fil-Am Virginia resident and a FACC

**FACC One of 100 non-profits with \$1,000 grants based upon nominations from Navy Federal employee volunteers.**



**Other Organizations Grants to FACC**



Gaithersburg Rotary Foundation  
P.O. Box 312, Gaithersburg MD 20884-0312  
501(C)(3) organization; tax number 46-0992470



For Nonprofits

volunteer, nominated FACC because she personally believes in FACC's and her extended family has been impacted by cancer.

Furthermore, the FACC also received a \$500 grant from the generous members of Gaithersburg Rotary Club (GRC) and its Foundation (GRF). Its president, Sara Torrence, and GRF Secretary Bob Bokma believe that FACC's Bear Cancer Christmas Care Bear Toys For Tots Project aligns with the seven areas of focus for the Rotary that includes the development of welfare for children and youth. In the past, GRC and GRF supported the Camp Fantastic for kids with can-

cer in Maryland. FACC uses this grant towards the expenses incurred out in Roxas, Philippines, this past December.

The project also distributed Christmas toys and food to children in families with cancer. It was held at the Hematology Oncology Unit, St. Anthony College Hospital, St. Roxas City, Capiz, Philippines. Furthermore, FACC receives a combined cumulative grant of \$500 from other organizations such as Cyber Grants by Car Max Foundation and Hope for Wreaths.

Lastly, Dr. Elwyn Cabebe, FACC's Medical Advisory Board and LEAD Representative, re-

ceived a \$25K community institutional research grant from Stanford University HealthCare Alliance for its proposed project entitled: A Santa Clara County-Based Action Study - Exploring the Fil-Am Community's Knowledge of Cancer Awareness and Prevention. The year-long proposed study will be implemented in four phases that aims to discover the knowledge levels of self-identified Fil-Ams, aged 18-35, related to Cancer Awareness and Prevention. At the completion of the study, the Research Team intends to prepare a report and integrate the findings and results into FACC and LEAD future programming.

"As we lead the fight for a world without cancer, it is our responsibility to find new ways to collaborate, innovate and drive support for these patients," said FACC Founder and President Josie Moralidad Ziman. "We're proud to collaborate with these various organizations to serve individuals in areas with higher burdens of cancer and limited or no access to money because every life is precious and worth fighting for."

"On behalf of our FACC Team, we are very grateful to these organizations for awarding us these grants and it's a testament of being trusted to fulfill this noble purpose," said FACC Co-Founder and VP, Edward Penaflores. "Serving at least the underserved

cancer communities to help patients and their families get the critical treatment care they need may be one of their greatest roadblocks. These grants will definitely help remove some of the barriers that patients and their families face when seeking to access cancer care."

ABOUT Filipino American Cancer Care: Established February 2020, a newly formed 501 (c)(3) non-stock, non-profit, non-political, charitable and all volunteer-based cancer organization in the US is dedicated to serving the Fil-Am cancer community. The FACC primary mission is to C.A.R.E. about Filipino, Filipino-American and anyone medically underserved in the Philippines and United States by assisting those impacted by cancer. The FACC's vision rest into four (4) major pillars of C.A.R.E. which denotes Collective outreach programs designed to fit our unique culture for our community, Advocate for better comprehensive cancer care during and after/post treatment, Research tools for cancer patients, survivors, family members, and caregivers regarding financial assistance, and lastly Educate our community on cancer prevention, early detection, screening and treatment options.

To learn more about FACC, please visit [www.filamcancer-care.org](http://www.filamcancer-care.org)

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER CARE SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

FACC ZUMBA EVENT CANCER PATIENTS BENEFICIARIES

**JENIFER LUNA**  
Breast Cancer Patient  
Gaithersburg, Md

**HERMIE MANALOTO**  
Liver Cancer Patient  
Rockville, Md

**ROCEL BORINAGA**  
Stage 4 Colorectal Cancer Patient  
Yuma, AZ

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM  
Show Start at 3PM  
Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Contact: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)  
<https://www.filamcancer.org>

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021**  
Music Concert / Zumba Contest

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM  
Show Start at 3PM

\$15 - Ticket  
For Pre-Sale Ticket Contact: 1-571-352-0165

FACC Cancer Patient Beneficiaries:

**MARY YASOL**  
2019 INTERNATIONAL WORLD GLOBAL MUNITY NG PILIPINAS 2021  
"Best in Talent & Best in Designer Gown"

Special Guest:

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM  
Show Start at 3PM

\$15 - TICKET

For Pre-sale Ticket / To Join Zumba Contest - Contact: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

**ZUMBA CONTEST**

RULES TO JOIN ZUMBA CONTEST:

- OPEN TO ALL 18 YRS. OLD & ABOVE.
- PARTICIPANTS MUST BE COMPOSED OF 5 MEMBERS UP TO 10 (MAXIMUM MEMBERS (1 ENTRY)).
- PER GROUP / GROUP NAME MUST BE REGISTERED (1 ENTRY).
- FEE \$10 EACH MEMBER.
- A MAXIMUM OF 80MINS. ZUMBA MUSIC OF ANY CHOICE.

1ST PRIZE - \$500, MEDALS & REVOLVING CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY  
2ND PRIZE - \$300, MEDALS & PLAQUE  
3RD PRIZE - \$200, MEDALS & PLAQUE

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING:  
Execution & Style - 50%  
Audience Impact - 30%  
Costume - 20%  
TOTAL - 100%

This special event will benefit 4 cancer patients in the United States.

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM EST  
Show Start at 3PM EST

Ticket - \$15

For pre-sale ticket / To Join Zumba Contest - Contact: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

FACC ZUMBA CONTEST JUDGE

**AISSA ENCOMIENDA**

This special event will benefit 4 cancer patients in the United States.

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6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM EST  
Show Start at 3PM EST

Ticket - \$15

Contact: Pre-sale ticket / To join contest: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

FACC ZUMBA CONTEST JUDGE

**KIMBERLY PACK**

THIS SPECIAL EVENT WILL BENEFIT 4 CANCER PATIENTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM  
Show Start at 3PM

Ticket - \$15

For Pre-Sale Ticket / To Join Zumba Contest - Contact: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

THIS EVENT WILL BENEFIT 4 CANCER PATIENTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

FACC ZUMBA CONTEST JUDGE

**JOANIE BARR**

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM  
Show Start at 3PM

Ticket - \$15

For Pre-sale ticket / To Join Zumba Contest - Contact: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

This Fundraising event will benefit cancer patients in the United States.

FACC Zumba Contest Judge

**RITA MANALO HAMMOND**

FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM EST  
Show Start at 3PM EST

\$15 - Ticket

For Pre-sale Ticket / To Join Zumba Contest - Contact: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

Hosted By:

**DAVE VALERIANO**

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

Venue: MASON DISTRICT PARK - AMPHITHEATER  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM  
Show Start at 3PM

\$15 - TICKET

THIS SPECIAL EVENT WILL BENEFIT 4 CANCER PATIENTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

ELVIS PRESLEY TRIBUTE ARTIST

**LIONEL WARD**

CONTACT: 571-352-0165  
EMAIL: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

**FACC HOPE FOR CANCER JOURNEY SUMMER EVENT 2021 ZUMBA CONTEST & CONCERT**

Venue: Mason District Park - Amphitheater  
6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
Gate Open at 1PM EST  
Show Start at 3PM EST

Ticket - \$15

Contact: Pre-sale ticket / To join contest: 1-571-352-0165  
Email: [filamcancer2020@gmail.com](mailto:filamcancer2020@gmail.com)

FACC Cancer Patients Beneficiaries:

**AMANTE "JUN" BUSTAMANTE**  
EYES DJ Zumba Event

**SUMMER EVENT 2021**

# Fil-Am Cancer Group Celebrates National Cancer Survivors Day®

FILIPINO American Cancer Care (FACC) Incorporated will hold the formal oath-taking ceremony of its directors, advisors and officers on Friday, June 18, 4:00 p.m. at the Philippine Chancery Build-

ing Annex. Ambassador Babes Romualdez and former US Ambassador to the Philippines HE Harry Thomas will be the guest speakers. Since its formation, FACC has successfully raised more

than \$26K, which funded 15 cancer patients and distributed food relief to more than 110+ cancer kids and their families in the Philippines. FACC has also received multiple community grants to fund production of

more than 1K DIY face masks, 3D mask extenders and cancer care packages for 6 hospitals located in the DMV area. The American Cancer Society (ACS) reports that Filipino women are more likely to

die of breast cancer than their major Asian American counterparts and Filipino men have the highest incidence and mortality rates for prostate cancer

# Filipino-American Catholics Join in the Annual Asia and Pacific Island Marian Pilgrimage

By **R. ONG**

ON MAY 1, the 18th annual Asia and Pacific Island Catholics Marian pilgrimage was held at the St. Michael the Archangel Church in Silver Spring, MD. The event opened the month dedicated to Mary and the Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Traditionally held at the Basilica of the National Shrine with participants from across the country celebrating their heritage and Marian devotions, the pilgrimage this year was scaled back due to the ongoing pandemic.

The Filipino-American parish ministry of St. Michael the Archangel Church led by its president, Tony Calaro, extended full support to the event. The gathering opened with a procession of the statue of Our Lady of Sheshan escorted by Filipino members of the Knights of Columbus – Tony Calaro, Carl Abella, Catalino Freolo, Mody Barrion, Mario Canlas, Raymond Bituin, including Jason Huh of St. Paul Ching Korean Catholic Church – who also served as ushers during the Mass.

Beautiful ornate statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary depicted as patroness of several Asian countries as well as statues of the two Filipino saints, San Lorenzo Ruiz and San Pedro Calungsod, were displayed in front of the church's sanctuaries.

The program started with a welcome by Aylene Mafnas, a Filipino Catholic, and Sister Myrna Tordillo, a Filipino member of the Missionary Sisters



**Above: Pilgrimage participants, from left Thea Balbago, Purita Balmaceda, Rening Sosino, Denia Calaro, Tony Calaro, Roberto Sosing, Msgr. Mariano Balbago, Jr., Ching Cabangon, Marylou Jackson.**

**Right: The Filipino-American parish ministry of St. Michael the Archangel Church is led by its president, Tony Calaro (right), along with Catalino Freolo and Carl Abella (center) of the Knights of Columbus, Council 15084.**



of St. Charles Borromeo, representing the USCCB Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the

Church. Sr. Tordillo highlighted the 500th anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines and



**The priests during the consecration. Photo by the Catholic Standard.**

the heroic examples of the two previously mentioned Filipino saints.

In the pilgrimage program, an essay written by Dr. Rosemarie Ong, also a Filipino Catholic who works for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, expressed the hope "that the historic celebration of 500 Years of Christianity may foster a renewed commitment and enthusiasm among the Filipino people to continue gratefully to live out and share this precious gift of faith wherever they may be in the world."

The Mass was celebrated by Msgr. Eddie Tolentino, the pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Church and concelebrated by Filipino priest, Msgr. Mariano Balbago and Fr. Chris Arockkijaraj. In his homily, Msgr. Tolentino, who noted that his grandfather was an immigrant from the Philippines, reminded the pilgrims that each home should be a place of prayer and that Mary can be a mother in each

home, where people should make Jesus present and families can help build a new and better world.

Before the Mass, the rosary was recited in different languages, including Indonesian, Indian Tamil, Korean, Vietnamese, and Samoan. The music for the Mass was played by Alice Kan of the Guzhang Ensemble on the Chinese zither, organist Dr. Scott Hawkins, music director of St. Michael the Archangel Church, and soloist/cantor, Que-Thanh Le.

The Marian pilgrimage was organized by the Asian and Pacific Island Catholic Network in collaboration with the Asian and Pacific Island Affairs section of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Catholic Bishops in the Church, with the support of the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach and the Office of Multicultural Ministries in the Diocese of Arlington.

## The Air We Breathe

SAFETY for our family, our employees, our customers, ourselves and the community in general, especially those in the service industry, is still our primary concern these days and arguably, for the years to come.

The health and wellness sector has grown by leaps and bounds in the past decade. A holistic growth targeting the food we eat, physical fitness, spiritual growth, among others. But we seem to have neglected, probably the most important thing we need for our survival, oxygen. The air we breathe.

Today, living through the pandemic has driven home the importance of the air we breathe, especially indoors where we spend 90% of our time – whether at home, in the workplace, our doctor's office, grocery stores, shops, restaurants, church, and so on.

**Indoor air quality (IAQ).** Focusing on improving IAQ can help reduce our risk of indoor health concerns and aid in the ongoing battle against daily

allergens and pollution. It is a key factor to consider, not only in the fight against the current pandemic but in preparation for any future similar events. New airborne viruses will keep springing up – it's not a matter of if but a matter of when.

### Health effects.

Studies have shown that poor IAQ may have immediate or long-term health effects. Immediate effects may include irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, headaches, dizziness, and fatigue. Other effects may not show up until years later, which may include visual disorders, memory impairment, some respiratory diseases, heart disease, liver, kidney and central nervous system damage, and cancer.

Let's look at some statistics.

- 8.8 million people died from illnesses attributable to air pollution in 2018
- 9 out of 10 people worldwide do not breathe safe air
- 600 workdays missed per 1000 workers due to poor IAQ

In 2018, the head of WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanm Ghebreyesus, called air pollution the "new tobacco". In 2020, a top concern expressed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) with regard to indoor spaces and the spread of Covid-19 was the risk associated with air conditioning and spreading viral particles through HVAC units.

With many people continuing to work from home and many others preparing for a return to the workplace, there are readily available solutions to improve your IAQ.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends three strategies to improve IAQ: source control; improved ventilation; and air cleaners. Similarly, experts agree that preparing for a return to the workplace should focus on increasing ventilation, enhancing HVAC filtration; and using portable air cleaners.

**Source control.** An effective way to improve IAQ is to eliminate individual sources of pollution or at the very least, reduce their emissions. There are many sources of IAQ, including fuel-burning combustion appliances, tobacco products,

central heating and cooling systems, humidifiers, excess moisture, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) found in many products like building materials, paints, furnishings, personal care and household cleaning products. Let's not forget outdoor sources that insidiously find their way indoors like radon, pesticides and outdoor air pollution. In truth, we use many products and devices that we don't even know emit harmful pollutants, so we fail to practice safe handling procedures.

**Improved ventilation.** This means bringing in more outdoor air indoors, which is particularly helpful while engaged in short-term activities that produce high levels of pollutants like painting, paint stripping, and cooking. We can do this by opening windows and doors, running a window air conditioner with the vent control open, or turning on local bathroom or kitchen fans. However, bringing in outdoor air may not be suitable under certain conditions like when the pollen count is elevated, or if you are on a busy street, or in an industrial area

*Focusing on improving Indoor air quality can help reduce our risk of indoor health concerns and aid in the ongoing battle against daily allergens and pollution. It is a key factor to consider, not only in the fight against the current pandemic but in preparation for any future similar events.*

# Juan's Race and Health



## RAISING JUAN

By **NATHALIE BERNABE QUION**, MD MPH FAAP

*"I visited the largest cities of America with their big buildings, electric lights, and magnificent conceptions. Undoubtedly America is a great country, but it still has many defects. There is no civil liberty. In some states, the Negro cannot marry a white woman, nor a Negress a white man. Because of their hatred for the Chinese, other Asiatics, like the Japanese being confused with them, are likewise disliked by the ignorant Americans"*

**Jose Rizal letter to Mariano Ponce dated July 27, 1888.**

I STUMBLED on this quote from a letter from Jose Rizal to Mariano Ponce, founder of the La Solidaridad, the propaganda newspaper of the Philippine nationalist movement. The message was written in 1888 and was featured in the book "Rizal Without an Overcoat" by Ambeth Ocampo, journalist and historian. The timeliness of my stumbling onto this quote is manifold. June is an important month for Filipinos. It is the birth month of Jose Rizal and the birth month of the Philippine Independence. Even though it was written 130 years ago, the observations of Jose Rizal continue to ring true. The United States has made significant progress when it legalized interracial marriage in 1967 but

fifty years later, we are still unraveling the issue of racial relations, particularly that of Asian hate.

There is no question there is no room for hate. But discussions on race do not stop with the absence of hate. We have to do more. One of the most salient discussions is the difference between racial equality versus racial equity and the current conversations are gravitating towards that of racial equity. Racial equality means all people are given the same resources and opportunities. This is in contrast to racial equity where each group is different and needs varying degrees of resources to achieve the same outcome. This concept acknowledges that the different systems we all live in are imbalanced and can be discriminatory.

Conversations on racial equality and racial equity are directly related to health equality and health equity. It is not enough to offer the same services to all. When we do that, we leave large swaths of the vulnerable and the underserved



INFOGRAPHIC COURTESY OF THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

behind. We need to meet people where they are at and then we can arrive at better health outcomes for all.

A concrete example is access to digital health, particularly during the beginnings of the covid pandemic. Although telehealth was available for everyone, the first wave and most frequent users were the digitally savvy generation who had the skill and equipment to implement it. Outreach efforts

were essential by health care organizations to ensure that education on the process and access to the internet and devices were available to reach older less tech savvy individuals, people in the rural areas and non-English speakers. This is where the racial and health equity efforts come in.

Finally, I found that translating the words of equality and equity in Filipino is difficult and imprecise. There is no direct

translation. But given time for reflection, to distinguish the words is a difference between an adjective and making it a verb or putting an action to it. Equality is "pantay pantay" and equity is "gawing pantay."

*Nathalie Bernabe Quion is a mother of five and a practicing pediatrician for 21 years. She is a professor in medicine, a mentor and writer. She is based in Washington, D.C.*

## Passages

### Vanessa Delacruz Manuel, 52



Sidney and Erwin De la Cruz, and in-laws Angela and Alfredo Manuel.

BORN ON June 28, 1969, Vanessa of Fort Washington, MD, passed away March 9, 2021 due to COVID. She was one of the finalists in the 1986 ISA's Miss Teen Philippines-USA Pageant. She used to work at the World Bank-IFC. She is survived by her parents, Cesar & Sally Dela Cruz; husband Anthony Manuel, daughter Veronica, 19, son Adam 17, siblings Jennifer,

### Salvador "Buddy" Aguilar Masanque, 76



Buddy loved playing the piano and DC sports and travelling the world with his family. He leaves behind his wife of 38 years (Josephine), six children (Clarissa, Joseph, Michael, James, Francis, Mark), and seven grandchildren (Nick, Madie, Miles, Gabriel, Rowan, Caleb, Caspian). Buddy is buried at National Memorial Park in Falls Church, Virginia.

### Spencer Wallac Sagudan



Spencer Wallac Sagudan and President Reagan in 1984.

From March 1979 to January 1993, he served in the White House Staff Mess. During this time he served four United States Presidents (Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush and Bill Clinton).

In January 31, 1993, he retired after 28 years of active-duty service. His ribbons, medals and commendations included seven Good Conduct Awards, Vietnam Service Medal, two National Defense Service Medals and Navy Unit Commendation.

Spencer is survived by his devoted wife Nieves Mariano; his only child Ronald and wife Analiza Gunaden; grandchildren, Dylan and Dyanne. Two surviving siblings, brother Mayos Wallac and sister Luminda Geweng. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.

### Robert "Bob" Allen Yangas, 87



sparked wonderment and curiosity. This curiosity, as well as an abiding dedication to community service, guided him throughout his life.

Bob passed away on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 surrounded by his family. He enjoyed collecting postage stamps. As a boy, he loved looking at the tiny illustrations and imagining the distant places from which they came, and the extraordinary journeys they must have had. Pictures of kings and queens, tropical flowers, pagodas and exotic animals were things that sparked wonderment and curiosity. This curiosity, as well as an abiding dedication to community service, guided him throughout his life.

Bob was especially interested in other cultures. During his graduate studies in New York, he leapt at the chance to join an educational program visiting India, Hong Kong and Japan. Over the years, he had the opportunity to work in Bangladesh, Mexico, Korea and Kenya. As a foreign student advisor at New York University, he joined the Overseas and American Students International Society (OASIS), an organization that brought international students and American students together. It was there that he met Linda, another OASIS member. They eventually married in Manila in 1966. With their children, Andrea and Kristian, they spent several years in the Philippines surrounded by Linda's family. He earned a Master's degree from the Asian Institute of Management in Manila.

The Yangas family ultimately settled outside of Washington, D.C., and became part of the international community. Retiring from the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board in 1997 gave Bob the opportunity to share his love of Asian history and culture as a docent for 20 years with the Freer-Sackler Galleries.

Bob is survived by wife Linda, daughter Andrea, son Khristian and four grandchildren.



# Take Care of your Precious Heart!

**M**AY is Blood Pressure Awareness month! Amazing to consider that one out of every 3 Filipinos has high blood pressure, and out of that number almost 70% are living with it uncontrolled. Uncontrolled blood pressure, called the "silent killer" often ends in stroke and heart attack.

The possibility of stroke is highest in the early morning hours between 2-6 a.m. when the body is getting ready to wake up. In the yogic tradition of Ayurveda, a 5000 year old system of health and nutrition, this time is called the "elixir" time, a time when the presence of God is more available to you for prayer and meditation.

My mom first heard about Ayurveda when we lived in Hawaii in the early 70's. We would pray the rosary, practice yoga, eat in season, eat our biggest meal during the day, and take time to rest in the afternoon.

Mom's version of rest was prayer and meditation. In the late afternoon as the day started to fade, my mom and I would sit in my bedroom and pray then meditate for 20 minutes. It was not an easy skill for a child to learn but for me it meant spending time with my mom.

Despite the lifestyle modifications, my mom would still spike shockingly high blood pressure. As the years went by and life became even more busy, she stopped her practices of self-care, preferring to dote on her grandchildren and sew as her grand outlet of relaxation. She would return to meditation for

months at a time, but when she would see the doctor, white coat syndrome would ensue and her blood pressure would soar to 220/120, sometimes higher. She would often stop her meditation practice after these visits.

She insisted on not taking medication, she felt it to be a sign of failure. The other practices that have proven consistently over time to lower blood pressure, she struggled to do: a low sugar diet, aerobic exercise, mindfulness in daily life, and spending time in nature. She was playing with fire and didn't realize it.

She called me one morning, her voice slurring, aware something was wrong when she could not write with her right hand. At the Emergency room she seemed fine, even the hospital staff could not see any difference, so I insisted that they admit her. Sure enough, she had a bleed in her left hemisphere. She lost the use of the right side of her body.

That same year, I was hiking at the highest point in Appalachia, around 6500 feet, and I noticed my heart was racing even with rest. At the Emergency Room, my EKG was normal. They suggested that I be evaluated for anti-depressants.

The advice made me feel badly. Was it true? I was aware that there was something wrong. I had been an athlete, although at that point a weekend warrior. Did I no longer know my body?

I went home and evaluated the 2 categories of risk factors: non-modifiable and modifiable.

## PAGLALAKBAY

By **RITA NAOMI**



“*Take care of yourself and do what needs to be done.*”

The non-modifiable risk factors include age, gender, family history, and race. Men develop cardiovascular disease (CAD) earlier at 45, but women die in proportionally greater numbers from heart attack and stroke. Women are most vulnerable between the ages of 50-55, continuing on throughout menopause. After the age of 65, the chance of developing CAD exponentially increases for everyone. In the United States, CAD kills African Americans disproportionately higher than any other race. In the Philippines, CAD is the number one killer. Hmmmmmm.

Mom had never been diagnosed with heart disease; her stroke was in fact caused by a buildup of plaque in the small arteries within her brain. She had no plaque in her larger arteries. Her physician who was Asian told me that there was a greater likelihood of this type of condition in Asians as well

as stroke... especially if blood pressure is uncontrolled.

I looked at modifiable risk factors: fasting blood sugar and blood cholesterol levels, obesity, smoking, and of course blood pressure. I didn't smoke, blood sugar was fine...but I was overweight by 20 pounds, and my cholesterol and blood pressure were all over the place. I, too, had developed white coat syndrome. I took to measuring my blood pressure and going back to my yoga practice, when one morning I woke up at 2 a.m. with my chest hurting.

As it turned out, I was not having a heart attack, however a cardiac cat scan showed I had a major block to the largest artery that supplies my heart. My symptoms were real.

I did not have a stent put in that day, the artery blockage was considered "borderline" and I developed collateral arteries as a compensation. They gave me the option of practicing yoga and meditation which effectively helped me to drop weight and my blood pressure.

Over COVID, I wrote a book called, "Go Outside: Connect and Learn with Your Family in the US National Parks." (In final edit) However, my weight crept up as did my blood pressure. Now closer in age to 60 than 50, I had to face the cold hard truth, that even now as a 500 hour trained yoga teacher, hiking guide, and a licensed physical therapist with numerous health certifications, I was more vulnerable to stroke and heart attack than before. Even though

I dropped the weight gain and my blood pressure lowered, I had to take the blood pressure medication.

Despite my pleas, Mom never listened to get her blood pressure stable. Even with being slight of build and following a healthy diet, she was not able to keep her blood pressure down. In meditation and yoga, we learn to monitor and care for our reactions in a healthy way. Meditation, yoga, and diet can sometimes yield a 100% cure, and often it can help lengthen your life. However, it does not mean ignoring conventional wisdom. It does mean paying attention to your needs as they arise AND taking action. If you have CAD already - and if you are Filipino, you probably do - sometimes you just can't do it all, and your body needs help.

Two months ago I went to see my doctor who was alarmed over my blood pressure. The next morning - that elixir time - my mom visited in a dream. She said, "Take care of yourself and do what needs to be done. If not for you, for your child and the work you are here to do." So I did.

*Rita Naomi recently featured on FOX, NBC, and other news channels for her work in helping people to feel better and have more energy in daily life. Email her at info@ritanaomi.com to develop a health recovery plan. You can follow her on Facebook or Instagram @ritanaomi.healer or find her at www.ritanaomivitalenergy.com.*

# Post 'Apocalyptic' Reflection

**W**ELCOME back folks! Welcome back to normal work hours, hugs, forehead kisses and public transit. We all have different viewpoints on the way we proceed forward, and we can argue about them ad nauseum. This article isn't about this, it's about what we have achieved during Covid and what we set out to do henceforth.

Some of us planted seeds that eventually (hopefully) turned into gardens. Now let's take that as a literal action but we can also explore that metaphorically. So if you were one of the million people that said to themselves "I never had time to garden and flowers make me happy," and during Covid you plant a garden, you watch it blossom and you watch it grow. You eat the veggies and fruits from your garden (or the squirrels do). You feel happy and fulfilled because you grew something, and it didn't die. And when you go back to a 40-hour workweek are you going to keep tending to your garden or are you going to watch it wither? Answer is on you.

Let's go to careers. Everyone was affected by the pandemic. Some lost their jobs, homes, and lives. Mental health became more to the forefront



## TRAVELLING WAITRESS

By **JOANNE RIVERA**

“*Throughout the process of coming back to normalcy we need to respect the fact that everyone is just trying to get back and survive.*”

in our society more than ever, even though that should have always been a priority in our communities. There is a fear that some people cannot return to their "norm" when it comes to working.

For restaurant and hospital workers, that is a fact. In my experience and with talking to my industry friends, it's been mostly a good thing. Why go



back to a job where you get paid \$2.15 an hour to get inundated with large crowds, health risks, long hours, and bad tips? Some of my friends have chosen to follow the path that they have always wanted to follow. Some of my friends are "lifers" - industry for life. Not everyone is trying to go

back and the ones that are, are committed. There isn't a whole lot of them but the ones that are, are gold!

But where does that leave the businesses? These restaurants are struggling to survive with limited staff with customers that are hungry and thirsty. Places have been closing left

and right but perhaps that is a reflection on the industry. Some would argue that we need to raise the base pay but for most places, however, that would put a lot of them in jeopardy. Some would argue that people need to go back to work regardless. Maybe this is an opportunity to reassess the way the service industry gets paid, or maybe this is an opportunity for a career change.

So back to the garden metaphor. Some of these establishments are someone's garden. Starting a business much less a restaurant, is hard. Most of the time it's propagating the seed, planting it, and hoping it grows. It requires an exorbitant amount of fees and licensing, with the hopes that it turns into something. Throughout the process of coming back to normalcy we need to respect the fact that everyone is just trying to get back and survive.

The next time you go to a restaurant, country club, resort, or concert, keep in mind as you are getting back to dining out and having fun, the people who facilitate this are still in a fight to get back to normalcy. Please respect that while going out. A good bunch of their hearts lay in feeding people, quenching thirsts, and making people happy and comfortable.

# Affidavit of Support

ON FEBRUARY 2, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14012 revoking the presidential memorandum issued by former President Trump on May 23, 2019 that made changes to regulations governing affidavit of support requirements under Section 213A of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Trump's rule change revised the definition of "public charge" to mean an individual who re-

ceives one or more designated public benefits for more than 12 months, in the aggregate, within 36-month period. It also defined "public benefit" to include cash benefits for income maintenance, Supplemental Security income, Temporary assistance to needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, most forms of Medicaid, and certain housing programs. The proposed changes were embodied in the

DHS Final Rule issued on October 2, 2020. The proposed rule change was challenged in the U.S. District Court of Illinois that initially vacated the rule. This decision was temporarily stayed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit but the same court eventually lifted the stay and the U.S. District Court decision vacating the change to the Public Charge Final Rule went into effect.

**IMMIGRATION NOTES**



By **J.G. AZARCON, ESQ.**

After March 9, 2021, applicants and petitioners should no longer provide information required under the Public Charge Final Rule. Applicants for adjustment of status are

no longer required to file Form I-944, Declaration of Self-Sufficiency, or any evidence or any documentation required on said form. Applicants and petitioners for extension of non-immigrant stay and change of nonimmigrant status should not provide information related to receipt of public benefits on prior editions of Form I-129 (part 6), form I-129CW (Part 6), form I-539 (part 5), and form I-539A (Part 3).

## How To Win In This Market?

"THIS is our fourth offer and we've yet to win the contract!" Sound familiar? Well, that is the new reality in today's real estate market. Sellers are the sure winners since the pandemic began last year. When the lockdown began last March, interest rates dropped an all time low, which prompted a lot of home buyers despite the global pandemic. COVID-19 also caused many home sellers became to hesitate showing their homes, ultimately delaying their plans of selling. The Law of Supply and Demand kicked in.



By **Jocelyn Porteria**  
Realtor®

*Bottom line: if you are not in a rush to buy, hold steady and wait for the storm to pass.*

When buyers now call me, my very first inquiry is, "are you in a hurry to buy a house?" If they say "No," I advise them to wait a bit until the market settles. But for sellers, I am more on the "let us put it on the market tomorrow" mood. I've even created a campaign to "Sell Your Homes Now," especially for homeowners who have at least two properties. Here is the thing: when the market crashed in 2007, all

because of today's high demands. I'm now advising sellers to sell their properties so they can potentially acquire their home equity before another housing crash. The lockdown caused a large spike in unemployment. Homeowners continue to be under forbearance, unemployment benefits and other government programs. But these economic benefits are due to end soon and when it does, home owners can only hope their paychecks are equal to pre-pandemic times. If 90% of them return to their normal salary, then the economy will bounce back. But if it doesn't, short sales and foreclosures will spike once again. This spike creates a negative snowball, as homeowners short selling will have a negative impact on the neighborhood property value, similar to that of 2007.

The biggest challenge in today's market is for the homebuyers looking to upgrade to a bigger home. You may receive multiple offers up to \$20-100k over asking price. That is a sure win as a seller. However,

you're stuck competing with the rest of the homebuyers. The good thing about today's economy is if you are downsizing; you are placed in a better position. Here is what I can suggest for buyers to win in this market: Make sure you have enough cash for a large down payment and closing costs. Gone are the days when sellers pay all, or a portion, of closing costs. Be ready to offer a lot more (possibly over \$10K) than the asking price. It could be \$20-\$50K depending on the property. Be willing to waive the home inspection, financing, and appraisal conditions. If you have any of those conditions, chances are, others will not and your offer will be in the trash. Another suggestion is to have the appraisal in place but offer at least \$10k more in case of lower appraisal. In this case, whatever your offer is; the sellers are granted \$10k more on the appraised price.

Bottom line: if you are not in a rush to buy, hold steady and wait for the storm to

pass. If you are selling your second home or retiring and no need to buy, sell your property as soon as possible!!! If you are selling, then buying, determine which benefits you more. The sure thing there is, you will already have your equity in your pocket.

**Note:** Jocelyn Porteria is a Realtor® licensed in VA. Featured in TOP AGENT Magazine in December 2020 issue. Consistent Top Producer of Fairfax Realty and earning Five-Star Reviews on ZILLOW from her clients. She is a Certified Expert Negotiator and earned a designation as an Accredited Staging Professional. To look what clients say about her visit her on Zillow, <https://www.zillow.com/profile/PorteriaProperties/#review>; website at [www.porteriaproperties.com](http://www.porteriaproperties.com) and check her Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PorteriaProperties>. She is also on Instagram and Twitter. Call her at 571-432-8335 or email at [porteriaproperties2021@gmail.com](mailto:porteriaproperties2021@gmail.com) for free and confidential consultations.

### VISA BULLETIN - PHILIPPINES

June 2021

**FAMILY-BASED**

- 1st: Unmarried sons/daughters of US citizens.....Feb. 22, 2012
- 2nd:
- 2A: Spouses/minor children of permanent residents..... Current
- 2B: Unmarried sons/daughters 21 years of age or older of permanent residents..... Oct. 15, 2011
- 3rd: Married sons/daughters of citizens...June 08, 2002
- 4th: Brothers/sisters of citizens..... June 08, 2002

**EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCES**

- 1st: Priority workers..... Current
- 2nd: Professionals holding advanced degrees or persons of exceptional ability..... Current
- 3rd: Skilled workers, professionals..... Current
- Unskilled Workers ..... Current
- 4th: ..... Current
- 5th: (Non-regional centers)..... Current
- (Regional centers) ..... Current



### Sharing the Love

After Purple Patch was vandalized on May 28, the DMV community rallied to stand in solidarity with owner Patrice Cleary, including friends from left, Bill and Bing Branigin, Amb. Harry Thomas, David Youngblood, Rodney Salinas, and Mithi Aquino.



### Vangie reads Manila Mail

She's 104 and Vangie Paredes still loves to read Manila Mail. A resident at an assisted living facility in Washington, D.C., Vangie keeps herself busy keeping up with the news, doing daily exercises and calling up family and friends. "But I prefer to go outside instead of being cooped up in my room," she says. "And I'm ready to go anytime if the Lord calls, but I'm not pushing it."

## So Here We Are

THE year 2020 brought the whole world to its knees, set upon by an infinitesimal assailant, invisible to our human eyes. That disadvantage spelled doom. COVID-19 created chaos among the unsuspecting global population. The consequence will become clear after the study of data demystifies and decodes the pandemic's secrets. Soon, I hope.

Even talk of herd immunity is spoken with crossed fingers lest the jealous covid imp hears and decides to run interference. A troubling result of the lockdown was the rise of stress, anxiety, and depression. Long periods of idle time weren't healthy. It uncovered unwholesome fixation on minutiae for some. Previously inconsequential problems became insurmountable. And when people were thrust into 24/7 togetherness, small irritations overwhelmed day to day relationship. The rise in suicide rates was predictable. None of us was spared from anguish.

Somehow, somewhere, we knew of people who came down with covid. Most did not survive the dreaded disease. Mourning, sympathy, anguish, and sorrow dominated our vocabulary. We are weary of

a growing list of family and friends who never will grace our table in this earthly life again. When it first appeared, the mere mention of covid evoked only terror and hopelessness. It lost some of its imperium, I perceive. But the anxiety, suspicion, and distrust that suffused our psyche would linger for a long time. Our battered spirit made us revise expectations and made us modify our behavior for self-preservation.

So here we are, halfway through 2021 CE (Current Era). We remain buried in the muck of the pandemic. The outlook has improved in America and the developed countries. The roll out of vaccines and updated anti-COVID medical protocols have contributed much to a better prognosis. The US continues her march towards herd immunity. According to statistics gathered by the Pharmaceutical-Technology.com, updated on May 29, 2021, 41.09% of the American population is fully vaccinated. Israel bettered us by 16%. But Gibraltar comes in with an unbelievable 113.21%. Now how to explain that? And most interesting is the data from China. Only about 167 million of its 1.4

billion people (roughly 11%) has been vaccinated. Reports from Beijing hopes to increase that number to 40% by June. (DW News, April 4, 2021)

Regrettably, the populous countries of India and Brazil (even my beloved Philippines) continue to struggle with finding a successful strategy to control the pandemic. India has vaccinated only 3.17% of her population. Brazil's rate is 10.49%. The Philippines has an embarrassing rate of 0.93%. WHO's point man, Tedros Adhonom Ghebreyesus, in a May 4 speech to address the India and Brazil problem, insisted that "vaccines is only a part of the answer but not the only answer." People, he said, must continue to wear masks and practice social distancing. Say that again, Mr. Tedros? Let me confess I lost confidence in the WHO Director General since his stubborn defense of Xi and the CCP.

Now what must the US government do with such a pronouncement? Several states, with the CDC's guidance, have relaxed mask-wearing and social distancing for fully vaccinated people. According to the CDC COVID Data Tracker, Weekly Review, May 28, 2021 report, "cases and deaths in the US have dropped

SA ATIN ATIN



By MYRNA LOPEZ

*We are slowly breaking loose from this scourge's grip. Even covid couldn't put romance at bay.*

to their lowest levels in nearly a year." This is supported by the lowest rate of positive results from Covid tests since the start of widespread testing. Less than 3% over the last 7 days. And of course, this is also because of the vaccine roll out.

The improving covid forecast came at a time when people's pent up desire to break out from the lockdown and restart travel have reached fever pitch. Our family finally enjoyed a much anticipated vacation to Florida after all the adults were fully vaccinated.

Through careful planning (and with our second daughter's knowledge), our son and his wife orchestrated a surprise – a whole week spent with all our children and apos, including our son and daughter-in-law. They were fully vaccinated after all. It was the best Mother's Day and Father's Day present Mitch and I received. Even Balou joined in the celebration. We have photos of our two older grandsons, aged 12 and 15, holding proof of their first covid vaccine dose. The three younger apos eagerly await their turn when vaccinations open for them.

We are slowly breaking loose from this scourge's grip. Even covid couldn't put romance at bay. Weddings happened. Through clever use of technology, we were able to join in the celebrations. However, love blossomed for these young people before the pandemic struck its evil blow. It made me wonder, how could courtship flourish in such a covid, mask-wearing, social-distanced environment? Should prospective lovers expect, even insist on proof of vaccination before entering into a relationship? Ought we to have a matchmaker, a modern yenta, make introductions? What a thought!

## Health In Hearth

TELEWORKING has become the new normal since the pandemic hit. I wonder what people think about it. My preference is to work from home and thankfully, I can do my job anywhere in the world. I can manage my time better as a lot of the to-dos before I get out the door every day are reduced considerably. Life is simpler and happier, in my case anyway.

Even in non-pandemic times, people already opt to work from home. Research shows the following top reasons why.

### 1. Life/Work Balance

In our fast-paced lives, there is not enough time to catch our breath, spend time with the family, make precious memories or do the things you want to do for yourself.

### 2. BYOB

Be Your Own Boss! No more performance evaluations! No office politics! Your efforts are an investment in your own business.

### 3. Flexible Work Hours

You can start work early, finish early. You can start at the usual time, take a break in between, work longer, as needed. The most important thing is



ISKARGUP ATBP

By ROSE MARIE ARMOUR

*The pandemic has made more employers realize that there is value in working from home.*

that the work is done and done on time.

### 4. No Commute/Save Time

Every minute you drive, sit in traffic, or wait for transport is valuable time which could have been spent on other activities. Do the math and you will be aghast at how much this is.

### 5. Save Money

Gas, lunch, snacks and other expenses incurred while going to work every day are reduced dramatically when you are working

from home.

### 6. Save the Planet

Less cars on the roads, less greenhouse gas emissions, less fossil fuel consumption, and less energy usage. This is indeed a classic case of less is more.

### 7. Increase Productivity

Given a setting where one can work quietly and with focus, geography can be taken out of the equation.

Working from home is not for everyone. There are people who prefer to work in a physical office setting. There are jobs that cannot be done via a virtual platform.

The pandemic has made more employers realize that there is value in working from home. If there is a goals and measures matrix in place and the work gets done, they might as well reduce significant overhead costs incurred in maintaining a physical location. Therefore, it will not be surprising to see an increase in telework among employees. Some employers may also come up with a hybrid approach. Or some employers may stick to the traditional in-person model.

Based on personal experience, I believe the key in successful teleworking is mindset and discipline. I have learned a few tricks and turned these into tips and hopefully, my fellow teleworkers will find them useful.

1. Create an "office" space, an area anywhere in the house where you can work. It may not be a separate area in your home but maybe with a noise-reduction headset, it can be.
2. Structure your day by creating a daily MOO (Method of Operation).
  - If possible, wake up at the same time every day.
  - Then maybe you start the day with a prayer, meditation or some exercises, whatever works for you to get the mind and energy going.
  - Conduct work/business-related activities.
  - Allocate time for collaboration and teamwork.
3. Get into a work attire. While a coat and tie would be an overkill, pajamas would be a tad underdressed.

4. Take breaks.

5. Stop when it's time to do so, unless work requires some flexibility from you, too.

At an individual level it is important to consider that whatever you decide, whichever model you choose, life/work balance is maintained. I hope that employers also take this into consideration when managing employee requests for flexibility in the workplace. One of the lessons learned from the pandemic is that our lives could change in a moment. Each moment counts, especially those spent with our loved ones. Don't we all wish we have more times like these?

*Rose Marie Desabilla-Armour, the great-granddaughter of Datu Agton of the Bagobo tribe of Davao City also belongs to the Alzate-Bustamante-Suazo-Bangoy clan. She currently resides in Brambleton, VA. She is a Global Manager for Forever Living Products, a company that has, since 1978, dedicated itself to seeking out nature's best sources for health and beauty with a commitment to quality and purity. Comments may be sent directly to rose@foreverlolita.com.*

■ Editorial

# Purple Patch: 'A Shining Example of Perseverance'

In the early morning of May 28, vandals destroyed the patio of Purple Patch – a popular restaurant in DC's Mt. Pleasant neighborhood. The outrageous act angered the DMV community that has cherished this place over the years.

"There is way too much hate going on in the world," said owner and Chef Patrice Cleary in a Facebook Post. "I'm beyond sad, I'm beyond angry, I'm emotionally drained. Our patio wasn't about us, it's about helping our community become whole again and giving back, doing our part. When will this stop? I am however beyond grateful that no one was hurt. #stopthehate #stopaapihate."

The immediate outpouring of support is a testament to Patrice as "one of the shining examples of perseverance and fortitude throughout this year-long quarantine," said Rodney Salinas, Vice President of the Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce-DC. "She literally transformed her entire restaurant into a successful, pandemic-friendly business model. And to see these criminals target her and her business in this way is sad and infuriating. But just as she navigated her way to survive this past year, she will endure this unfortunate episode as well."

Thank you, Patrice, for all you've given to our community, for always making us feel at home.



■ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



PHOTO BY PAUL I. TANEDO

## Memorial Day Tributes to our Veterans

(www.manilamail.us May 31, 2021)

THANK you for putting these stories together. The young generation now needs stories like this to keep them rooted and appreciative of the treasures/legacy handed to them. Pray that they should continue to honor the brave men and women before them. Dios Mabalos! – **MaryLou Jackson**, Burtonsville, MD.

These stories are so beautiful, poignant and powerful. Thank you Manila Mail for always showing the heartbeats of our community. Bless all of

our community who made the ultimate sacrifice and the families who continue to cherish them. – **Anita Merina**, Deal Island, MD.

Would it not be wonderful if these beautiful memories and more will be put in a coffee table book so that the younger generations will be able to learn from them? Thank you for putting together our most-treasured stories of our family heroes. – **Agnes Conaty**, Laurel, MD.

EDITORIAL CARTOON ■ By JYM E. ANDALIS



## Coming and Going at the Embassy

ASULLEN looking tsismoso who might be a silent admirer was sad upon learning that former Third Secretary and Vice Consul Darell Artates has returned to the Philippines to take on a new assignment.

"Mabait siya at saka very approachable, cute pati."

The Public Diplomacy Officer left for Manila in April to take a post in the Office of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Washington, D.C. was her first foreign assignment serving the Pinoy community for six years.

Darell's replacement is a young gentleman named Mark Lim, an Ateneo graduate. Tsismoso's warning to Mark, don't



WASHINGTON TSISMISO

By TSISMOSO

beware of girls. If they are persistent, report them to your Mom. With large social gatherings likely permitted again, brace yourself for a never ending Kodakan which will make you suffer from hot flashes.

Consul General Jose Victor Chan Gonzaga arrived in DC around two years ago. He

is now preparing to leave his present post for a new assignment.

One Embassy observer says that JV became the face of the Philippine Embassy during the pandemic. He issued guidance and information on consular services, coordinated the repatriation of furloughed OFWs and actively promoted local Pinoy businesses. He skirted the pandemic limitations in communications through virtual meetings and presentations. He showcased the natural beauty of the Philippines, the culinary prowess of Pinoy chefs and highlighted the de-

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# MANILA MAIL

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## For Better or for Worse

ONE hundred twenty days have passed into the Biden administration. How are we doing?

You gas up your car and lo and behold, price per gallon has gone up by at least a dollar, the highest in seven years. The administration's decision to cancel the Keystone pipeline project and its suspension of fossil fuel exploration and drilling on federal lands sent shivers in the market concerned about future supplies.

The price increase has also crept into other goods and services. Your Memorial Day barbecue must have cost you more. From groceries, to lumber, to motor vehicles and houses, prices are rising faster than Biden's stumbling run up the tarmac stairs to Air Force One. Yes, inflation is here, estimated last month at more than 4% and rising.

Experts have attributed this inflation to the pandemic largesse of the Biden administration, pumping \$1.7 from the Covid Relief stimulus package. According to the Heritage Foundation, only 10% of the spending relates to public health. The

rest were giveaways for education, supposedly to open public schools even if most of the allotted money will be spent in 2026, health plans that support abortions, welfare expansions, rescue of private-sector pension plans benefiting unions, generous unemployment compensation for some critics blame for incentivizing workers not to work and race-based loan forgiveness for farmers.

Biden is proposing another \$6 Trillion budget, further increasing the national debt now at \$27.9 Trillion. It is child abuse to impose on the children of tomorrow to shoulder the heavy burden of paying for today's reckless spending as if printing more money is the magic pill.

During the campaign, Biden said that he did not support the "Green New Deal" championed by the progressives. Now, Rep. Alexandra Occasion Cortes, the Democratic firebrand from New York is applauding Biden's apparent shift in his proposed infrastructure plans.

Would this splurge in Green New Deal projects turn out to be just about burning dollar bills chasing unrealistic expect-

tations?

Al Gore, AOC and Hollywood say that science is settled. I wonder if they know more about climate science than physicist Dr. Steven Koonin. In 2014, he was the lead moderator in a scientific debate sponsored by the American Physics Society between three climate scientists supporting the consensus on manmade global warming and three climate scientists who disagreed with it. An expert in computer modeling, he came away from that debate with a new understanding that the science on climate change is less than mature as he had supposed. He has since written a book: "Unsettled: What Climate Science Tells Us, What It Doesn't, And Why It Matters." He served in the Obama administration as under-secretary at the Department of Energy in 2009.

Mark P. Mills of the Manhattan Institute summarized the findings of The International Energy Agency (IEA) in a Wall Street Journal article casting serious doubt on the feasibility of transitioning to "clean energy" as envisioned by the Biden

### KIBITZER'S CORNER

By **J.G. AZARCON, ESQ.**



*Handing Biden the vaccine to slay the virus beast was as difficult as rolling a boulder on a down slope.*

administration. According to the IEA, that would require mining and infrastructure that don't exist. The need for rare earth minerals would increase exponentially beyond the realistic capacity of the world to meet the demand. It would require a global mining boom that is water intensive with undetermined environmental consequences.

We do not have a crisis at the border, says Biden. The border is closed, says Department of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas. It is a creative way to solve a problem. Just pretend it's not there. It took a Democratic congressman from Texas, Henry Cuellar to expose the while the Democrats expressed outrage at images of migrants being detained in chain-link holding facilities during the Trump administration, they are rum on similar facilities now bursting at the seams in the Biden administration.

Biden's decision to suspend deportations and reverse Trump's remain in Mexico policy for asylum seekers encouraged desperate people to take their chances and take a long and dangerous long journey to the border. With close to 200,000 known migrants breaching the border, the Border Patrol is overwhelmed and forced to release migrants untested for Covid to the general population.

Critical race theory seems to have gained foothold in our

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## Matthew's Grill is Sizzling... Again!

AFTER more than a year of lock-downs, Chef Owner Reymond Domingo ushered in dinner guests once again to Matthew's Grill in Gaithersburg, MD. The past year has been hard on the restaurant business.

It was a little chilly and wet outside but on this Saturday night before Memorial Day, it was hot and heavy inside: unmasked friends (all vaccinated) shaking hands, laughing and hugging, their bodies moving to the heart-thumping beat of DJ Ruben Vargas' music, feasting on a buffet of Reymond's culinary best that catered perfectly to everyone's tastes.

Occasion was a private party to celebrate the graduation of Kayla Tiller, 21-year-old daughter of Melanie and Bill Tiller of Burtonsville, MD. Around 25 family and friends came to wish Kayla well. Fresh from earning a Business Administration degree from GW, she is eager to continue her academic pursuits by possibly going to law school in the Fall.

"Education is something that has always been emphasized in my household, especially by my mom," she says. "She would tell me about her childhood in Guinobatan, Albay, and the long distances she traveled to go to school - walking several miles, crossing a river, and sometimes having to walk barefoot. She told me not to take my education for granted, and that working hard and making sacrifices are necessary to achieve my goals."

Among the mentors she thanked is MaryLou Jackson, the operations manager at GW's School of Media and Public Affairs. She was there with husband Larry to take part in the

### OUR TOWN

By **JON MELEGRITO**



revelry. She hired Kayla on a work/study program for two years. "She understood my goals and challenges," Kayla said of her mentor. "My network of support from peers, family and close friends helped me graduate with honors. Now I have lifelong connections I will cherish the rest of my life."

And some of those connections were there Saturday night. Treating these "special people" to Matthew's Grill is the first thing Kayla wanted to do to express her appreciation. And it was the perfect setting for a celebration. A clean, well-lighted place with the sweet aromas of spiced dishes intoxicating the senses. Her proud parents were only

too happy to share an evening of fun, an occasion made even more meaningful now that everyone can literally see each other's beaming faces and giddy smiles, hug and shake hands, and hit the dance floor without staying six-feet apart for a change.

Reymond and his merry band of cooks and staff made sure it was all worth it. They couldn't contain their glee at being able to open again that they unabashedly mixed it up on the dance floor, with the inimitable Jumbo Montes taking the lead as Inigo Pascual's Dahil sa Yo came on. And for one magical moment, the dining room rocked with back steps, forward slide-shimmies, hand swings and open arms bursting with stretches. And cheers.

The spirit of the evening was aptly captured by the song's last line: "Pagkat nandito ka, ako'y liligaya!" (Because you are here, I am happy!). And fun was had by all.



Elated that they're now open for indoor dining are, from left, Ruby Arenas, Chef Jumbo Montes, Marissa Cabigan, Grace Cabot, Owner Reymond Domingo, Liza Arias, Elsa Pagurigan, Marvin Daquiz.

## Struggling with an Imagined Alternative

SOMETIMES funny, often puzzling but a source of constant concern, signs point to the start of political jockeying for the May 2022 national elections in the Philippines.

With the economy a mess after a year of the Covid 19 pandemic; frustrations growing against an expansionary China; the increasing focus on the excesses of government's drug war along with chronic hunger and poverty, Filipinos appear ready for change. The question is what that "change" will look like.

Then Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Roa Duterte ran for the presidency in 2016 on a strongman platform, vowing to abolish Congress, ridding the nation of drug traffickers in six months, and riding a jet ski to plant the Philippine flag in Scarborough Shoal that China annexed in 2012.

Mr. Duterte has never made any pretensions about his authoritarian bent. He openly displayed his misogyny, contempt for critical Catholic leaders including the Pope as well as "hostile" foreign leaders, disdain for the political opposition - imprisoning some and harassing others - and proudly admitted to murdering suspected criminals. He described the United States as "lousy" and called then Pres. Barack Obama an s.o.b.

Often clouded by controversy, he nonetheless remained popular with Filipinos - if you believe the polling. The Pulse Asia survey last October showed Mr. Duterte's approval rating at an unprecedented 91 percent but that was before the

### PINOY FILES

By **RODNEY J. JALECO**



*If change is to come to the Philippines, the biggest challenge for Filipinos is imagining an alternative to six years of Mr. Duterte.*

Covid pandemic. More recently, the Singapore-based Publicus Asia released the President's numbers last April, showing his approval rating at 65 percent and trust rating of 55 percent, five and seven percent declines, respectively, compared to the firm's December 2020 survey.

An intra-party spat triggered by Sen. Manny Pacquiao's May 25 memo opposing a plan to convene the PDP-Laban general assembly, could be the opening salvo of the campaign season. Party elders stressed that the "Pacman" was merely "acting president" after Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel relinquished the post last year, and only Mr. Duterte, the PDP-Laban chairman, can convene the general assembly.

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## KIBITZER'S CORNER

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educational system. This is purportedly a social justice belief that white people are born guilty of the oppressive system established in the past and they must atone for it. People must be socially reprogrammed. Present institutions must be cleansed to achieve racial equity. Start with education, reinvent admission policies and the curriculum.

There is a new animal called "ethnomathematics" which according to the USA Today article of James S. Robbins is supposed to dismantle racism by promoting the idea that math is not objective and the focus on the right answer should be de-emphasized. There are attempts to introduce this in Oregon, Virginia, and California. Instead of producing more engineers, scientists and technical wizards, the schools will be factories for social activists.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County was required to do away with the rigorous admissions tests that

resulted in Asians making 70% of the admissions. New York City's Specialized High School Admissions Test was also thrashed for reasons of racial equity. Why is it inequitable for Asians to be overrepresented in highly competitive schools and not inequitable for other minorities to be overrepresented in the highly lucrative professional sports leagues?

We are seeing light at the end of the tunnel. Per CDC, half of Americans have received at least one dose of the vaccine, with 40% fully vaccinated. Mask requirements have been largely loosened for vaccinated people. Travel is picking up as people have started to come out of their cocoons.

Biden has congratulated himself for ramping up vaccinations, glossing over the primary role of governors in the vaccine roll-out. Largely ignored is the guy named Trump who was largely responsible for Operation Warp Speed that produced the vaccine in record time. Handing Biden the vaccine to slay the virus beast was as difficult as rolling a boulder on a down slope.

Half-empty or half-full? It depends on the eyes of the beholder.

## PINOY FILES

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The gathering is expected to include the party's candidates, including Mr. Duterte's possible successor. Though he's never come out openly, Mr. Pacquiao hasn't exactly shut down talk about his presidential ambitions. Anonymous party sources have also been floating drafting Mr. Duterte as their vice-presidential bet.

The President's men have been busy floating several names as possible successor of the Duterte mantle – principally his daughter "Inday Sara", the current mayor of Davao City. Though he's thumbed down the notion of a woman succeeding him, allies have been visibly building a grassroots infrastructure hand-in-hand with raising Ms. Duterte's public profile – much like what Sen. Bong Go, the president's loyal sidekick, is doing for himself.

Sen. Grace Poe and Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagosa are counted as "dark horses" gauging from the polls.

Another survey favorite, former Sen. Ferdinand "Bong-bong" Marcos Jr. flew to Davao City to personally wish Ms. Duterte who turned 43 last May 29. He had also met with then Mayor Duterte in September 2015, two weeks before he formally became a presidential candidate. Mr. Marcos ran as the president's running mate but was defeated by the Liberal Party's Leni Robredo.

Vice Pres. Robredo and former Supreme Court Chief Justice Antonio Carpio have emerged as frontrunners for the opposition. Neither have declared plans for 2022 although there's been a groundswell of support to draft them for the coming campaign.

Mr. Carpio is today the most

vociferous critic of the administration's policies toward China and the territorial dispute in the West Philippine Sea. On the other hand, Ms. Robredo is a soft-spoken, sober lawyer who's offered a stark contrast to the president's profanities, knee-jerk, boasting style. Both however are hampered by the palpable lack of machinery as well as a war chest that can match any of Mr. Duterte's proxies.

Both the administration and opposition camps are still fragmented at this stage. For the former however, a nervous tick reveals a deep desire to preserve the status quo. Mark Thompson wrote in the East Asia Forum that while the president's "brute force governance" faced only weak and disorganized pushback, sustaining "Dutertismo" would be more difficult.

It's entirely possible Filipinos as the elections draw nearer, opening the truth and truth-telling to uncertainty assault. Adding fuel to uncertainty, Mr. Duterte has signaled he's not ready to fade away and could reprise former US Pres. Donald Trump who's kept his hold on followers by fanning the "Big Lie" he won the 2020 election that he lost.

"The situation of distress, the breakdown of belief, the distortion of communication," set the stage for the emergence of strongmen, said Chandan Kharme in this dissertation about the "strongman illusion". In times of political trouble, Hitler biographer Ian Kershaw said "charisma, narcissism and psychopathy exceedingly help them excel".

If change is to come to the Philippines, the biggest challenge for Filipinos is imagining an alternative to six years of Mr. Duterte.

## THE AIR

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where air is not so fresh, and odors are not so pleasant. Improved ventilation is just one part of the solution and care should be exercised in its design and execution.

**Air cleaners.** The EPA says, "the effectiveness of an air cleaner depends on how well it collects pollutants from indoor air and how much air it draws through the cleaning or filtering element". There are many types of air cleaners on the market, and they range in sizes and prices from inexpensive tabletops to high-end whole building systems. Portables filter the air in a particular area while central furnace or HVAC filters operate to filter the air throughout a home or building. Finding the right one for you needs serious thinking.

Employing any one of these three strategies, preferably all three at the same time, is a firm step in the right direction. We fight for so many things that matter. It's about time

we fight for the air we breathe.

**Recommendation.** If you are looking for a recommendation on residential or commercial air purifiers, Healthway Family of Brands is one company that stands out with solutions that are particularly effective in combating all three pollutant categories: micro-organisms, VOCs and ultrafine particles.

*Healthway's Disinfection Filtration System (DFS) technology was developed through a U.S. Military grant to combat germ warfare. It filters out ultrafine particles up to .007 micron, like mold, bacteria and viruses (including coronavirus at .1 micron), while HEPA filters remove ultrafine particles up to .3 micron only. For more information, contact Gold & Green, LLC at info@gng-llc.net.*



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## FIL-AM CANCER

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among all Asian-American ethnic groups. Furthermore, Fil-Am patients in need of a bone marrow transplant face slim odds when it comes to finding a life-saving match due to underrepresentation in the donor registry, making up just less than 6 percent of potential donors. Major advances in cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment have resulted in longer survival. However, a cancer diagnosis can leave a host of problems in its wake.

In observing the 34th Annual National Cancer Survivors Day®, FACC joins thousands of people across the globe to raise awareness about the challenges faced by cancer survivors. To this end, FACC is sponsoring a summer mini concert featuring Lionel Ward, a Las Vegas Elvis Presley Tribute Artist and many talented local Fil-Am performers, including Enzo Bustamante, Katrina Manabat, Charmaine Cabatuando, Excelsa De Jesus and Emelyn Burgess.

FACC is also sponsoring the 2021 Inaugural Zumba Contest with impressive Zumba judges, including: Ms. Joanie Barr of Fairfax, Virginia, a licensed Zumba instructor with 30 plus years of experience as an instructor in group exercises and a volunteer instructor for Life With cancer; Ms. Kimberly

Pack, another licensed Zumba instructor who emphasizes musicality, student engagement, rhythm variations and safety; Ms. Aissa Encomienda of Baltimore, Maryland, PE Dance Teacher at Royal International Christian Academy who currently works as a senior Loan Mortgage Officer at Wise lending and Ms. Rita Manalo Hammond of Potomac, MD also known as the Dancing Queen of the DMV Zumbanians where she teaches weekly classes at the Evolution Dance studio. Serving as Emcees are Dave Valeriano of Rockville, MD, a successful local DMV theater actor and World Champion of Performing Arts and Mary Yasol of Miami Florida, also known as the "Real Estate Beauty of Queen of Miami" who won the title of 2019 Ms. International World Global and a 2011 runner candidate of Mutya Ng Pilipinas beauty contest. The rules for the Zumba contest have been set out on FACC's FB page.

The event theme is Hope for Cancer Journey. Among the beneficiaries are: Hermie Manaloto of Rockville, MD., a liver cancer patient waiting for a live organ donor; Jenifer Luna of Gaithersburg, MD., a breast cancer patient; and Rocel Borinaga of Yuma, AZ., a colon cancer patient. The fundraiser will be held on Saturday, June 19, 2021 at the beautiful green scenic open-air space of Ma-

son District Park Amphitheater in Annandale, VA. Gates will open at 1pm, two hours before the show starts. The \$15 ticket includes snacks and drinks. For more information, call 571-352-0165 or email: filamcancer-care2020@gmail.com.

"Come see how life after cancer is more than just surviving. It's about living well. And that's something to celebrate," says Edward Logan, 2015 leukemia cancer survivor and Co-Founder/Vice President of FACC. "You will find our community's National Cancer Survivors Day® celebration filled with joy, hope, camaraderie, and compassion as we acknowledge our community's cancer survivors. We will also recognize the contributions of their families, friends, and healthcare providers and raise awareness of the ongoing challenges faced by cancer survivors today."

"Despite the numerous obstacles they face, cancer survivors live full, active lives and are an inspiration to all of us," says Josie Moraleda Ziman, 2018 breast cancer survivor and Founder/President of FACC. "It's time for our community to stand with them and help find ways to lessen the burdens a cancer diagnosis brings."

To learn more about FACC, please visit [www.filamcancer-care.org](http://www.filamcancer-care.org)

## TSISMOSO

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lightful Pinoy music and dance.

He will return to Manila without gaining weight as the pandemic saved him from attending numerous Pinoy parties and inductions all over the U.S.

No, he is not going home to run for governor. Not even Barangay Captain.

Deputy Chief of Mission Renato Villa's stint in DC is also coming to a close. Before the pandemic he was the go-to guest speaker at many Filipino organization events when the ambassador was not available.

Notwithstanding his largely untold story of being a hero for

his role in the rescue of OFWs in Kuwait, he is very friendly and unassuming. One tsismoso describes him as- "He does not look corrupt, parang hindi bolero." Nothing wrong with that, no presumption of guilt for this good diplomat.

Defense Attache Gen. Marlo Guloy already left and is being replaced by Army Col. Amado De La Paz.

Police Attache Major General Sotero Ramos, Jr. will also be heading back to Manila this month. No replacement has been named yet.

At some point in time when the Duterte administration ends, Tsismoso's favorite Ambassador Babes Romualdez will also likely say goodbye.

Tsismoso asked his barber who would he like to be the next Philippine ambassador to Washington, D.C.?

"Manny Pacquiao!"

"Why?"

"Matagal ko nang gustong mag-selfie sa kanya. Kung nandito siya, puede na. At saka, matapang ito. Hindi siya susuko sa English na debate laban sa mga diplomats ng China. Mahilig din ito magbigay ng balato. Baka librihin pa niya ang gastos sa induction ng aming Samahang Gupiteros."

Wishful thinking only. For now, the legendary Pinoy boxer is still dreaming of winning the highest title of the land, President of the Philippines, if Duterte will let him.

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