REMEMBERING
JOSE RIZAL

By HFC Staff

The Knights of Rizal-Hawaii Chapter will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Dr. Jose P. Rizal, the Philippines' foremost national hero, on Sunday, June 19, 2011.

Rizal was marched from his cell at Fort Santiago and shot by a firing squad on December 30, 1896. He was sentenced to death after the Spaniards found him guilty of rebellion, sedition and of forming an illegal association.

Members of the Knights of Rizal will gather on June 19 in Downtown for the unveiling of a special sign acknowledging the Dr. Jose P. Rizal Square. Last year, the Honolulu City Council passed a resolution renaming part of College Walk as the Dr. Jose P. Rizal Square.

In the evening, the organization will gather at the Hale Koa Hotel's Waikiki Ballroom for the Dr. Jose P. Rizal Awards Gala. The highlight of the evening will be awarding of the Inaugural Dr. Jose P. Rizal Awards for Peace and Social Justice, sponsored by the Knights of Rizal and the Filipino Community Center. The award recognizes individuals whose lives and works embody the precepts and ideals of Rizal.

The award is one way of recognizing Dr. Rizal's accomplishments and keeping his legacy alive," says Jun Colmenares of the Knights of Rizal. "We plan to institutionalize the award by keeping it an annual event. We felt that it is high time to honor individuals, Filipino or non-Filipino, who best represent the ideals of our national hero, and we believe that we have such individuals here in Hawaii."

Colmenares encourages the

(continued on page 4)

By Paolo ROMERO

‘Chedeng’ Gathers Speed, Changes Direction

MANILA, Philippines - Typhoon "Chedeng" (international name Songda) gathered speed as it changed direction Wednesday afternoon, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said.

PAGASA said in its 5 p.m. bulletin that the typhoon changed direction from west northwest to northwest. The typhoon gathered speed from 9 kilometers per hour to 15 kph, the weather bureau added.

The typhoon, located 310 kilometers east of Catanduanes, Northern Samar, remained strong with maximum sustained winds of 130 kilometers per hour and gusts of up to 160 kph.

Public storm signal number 2 remains hoisted over Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte and the three Samar provinces.

The weather bureau has included Quezon and Aurora provinces in the list of areas under public storm signal number 2.

(continued on page 4)

By Ruth MABANGLO

UH Filipino Undergraduates Earn Fulbright-Hays Scholarships

By Paolo ROMERO

REMEMBERING
JOSE RIZAL

Katherine Jumalon, Philip Cezar Sarmiento and Ritchilda Yasana receiving full scholarships and privileges from the U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant and Fulbright Haynes. The scholarships (continued on page 4)
Victory for Taxpayers at 2010 Legislature

The top priority for Hawaii’s state legislature was no different than any other in the country—to balance the budget with reasonable loss to government operations. The class of 2010 Hawaii lawmakers should be commended for accomplishing this, and most notably, having done so without increasing the income tax or State General Excise Tax (GET).

Legislators came into the session perhaps without the same enthusiasm as in the past knowing that their work this year would require making hard decisions, even letdowns via cuts to programs and holds on funding projects. Everyone knew what was to be expected but that didn’t stop some interest groups from lobbying only to leave with fiscal uncertainties.

The State House in particular, under Speaker Calvin Say, provided the kind of leadership needed for Hawaii’s working people during these trying times. From the very start, House leadership rejected the idea of raising the GET, while the State Senate left it as an option. Gov. Neil Abercrombie also sided with the people expressing his anti-GET hike stance.

Due to massive public outcry from the community and businesses, the Senate finally folded, siding with the House and governor to forego raising the GET and passing instead another measure that will generate some $600 million in revenues for the state. Even though Senate President Shan Tsutsui waivered on the GET and suspension of exemptions, as a freshman at the helm, he deserves credit for standing against powerful interest groups that lobbied hard against the bill. We are encouraged that he will continue this type of “we-the-people” leadership over the interests of a powerful few.

Lawmakers’ decision to suspend temporarily some businesses’ general excise tax exemptions actually follows a nationwide trend federally and nationally, second guessing the soundness of extending corporate exemptions while government operations face shortfall. The other alternative would be to raise taxes on citizens—a much more damaging and unpopular position.

The fact is these businesses are not unfairly targeted, but now are required to finally pay their fair share in GET as other businesses have been doing. No doubt that the lift on these exemptions will come at a cost to consumers by added expenses being passed onto them, but the impact should be less in scope and far less, relative to what consumers would pay for an across-the-board GET hike for the entire state, or worst yet, a boost on income taxes.

Kudos also should go to the many concerned individuals, media, community and business groups who were vigilant against the GET hike proposal. It was a concerted effort that bridged the gap among people of numerous political persuasions that we hope will continue. If the message wasn’t clear enough, it must be reiterated that Hawaii residents at this moment are already being stretched too thin by work furloughs, frozen wages, unemployment, closures, rising costs of gasoline, health insurance, and most basic goods and services. A GET hike hurts businesses and should only be considered when the economy is back on solid footing.

Aside from this one major victory, the 2010 legislature was short in vision with no one singular bill that stands out (aside from the civil unions bill) of the 250 passed this year. In cooperation with the public, perhaps lawmakers must reexamine the fundamental role of state government. This would better enable them to focus their energy on areas that could be worked on with greater results. Otherwise, streamlining government operations, maintaining what’s deemed “essential” at the time and searching for piecemeal revenue streams, as what occurred this 2010 session, will be the sole matters of business in the near future as we all wait for better economic days. We deserve better from our elected representatives.
President Obama’s New Mideast Policy is Flawed!

SHOOTING STRAIGHT
by Bobit S. AVILA

T he oldest book in my personal library, the New Universal Atlas from the year 1857, and if you compared those old maps to today’s political maps, you will note that some countries no longer exist. One such country is Palestine, which has been replaced by Israel. This only tells you that Britain committed a huge mistake in creating the state of Israel and removing Palestine from the face of the earth. This is why today the Middle East has always been in turmoil because the Palestinians want what was theirs in the past.

But let’s not forget that the ancient past also included Israel. If you go further back into world history, you will note that almost half of Europe was under the Ottoman Empire (1289-1928), which was a Muslim dominated world. While it was one of the longest reigning empires, the Ottoman Empire, just like all the empires before it, also collapsed. The problem is, too many of us forget our history, which is why we are destined to repeat them.

One such country is Palestine, which has been replaced by Israel. The Palestinian State side-by-side with Israel. For as long as the Palestinians refuse to make that protest in the earliest possible time, it would be tantamount to telling the Chinese Air Force pilots to continue flying into Philippine skies. I’m just wondering if this was what the Aquino administration meant by its Open Skies Policy. Incidentally, if you didn’t know, the OV-10 “Bronco” is a Counter Insurgency (coin) aircraft, which tells you that it had no business flying into the Spratlys where there is no insurgency there as it is mostly over water. This only shows that the Philippine Air Force (PAF) for lack of air assets is using the wrong aircraft for their reconnaissance missions. (www.philstar.com)

EDITORIAL

(cont. from page 2; WAITING…)

Task Force had included the Philippines in an international blacklist of money laundering havens. The blacklist might have been ignored, but it made financial transactions and other business operations difficult in the Philippines. The government complied, but left so many operations beyond the reach of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, including corruption, bribery and malversation of public funds.

The law excluded many other offenses such as hijacking, carjacking, human trafficking, violations of the Dangerous Drugs Act, forgery and counterfeiting, environmental violations and tax evasion. Also excluded was one of the concerns that inspired international cooperation against money laundering: terrorism and related offenses.

The AMLC found its hands tied further following a court ruling requiring subjects of an investigation by the council to be notified first before their bank accounts could be opened for scrutiny.

Recently the council again reminded Congress that amendments to RA 9160 are still waiting for legislative approval. Congress should not wait for international sanctions to be slapped on the country and affect business before acting on the proposals. (www.philstar.com)
The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), meanwhile, alerted all its units against the typhoon.

It has advised local risk reduction and management councils to advise local government officials to order pre-emptive evacuations of families living in low-lying and mountainous areas due to possible occurrence of landslides and flash-floods.

In its directive, NDRRMC chief Benito Ramos reminded all units nationwide of the government’s “zero casualties” target during typhoons.

The Department of Public Works and Highway (DPWH) has also deployed quick reaction teams in provinces identified by PAGASA as critical areas including Western Visayas, Bicol, Cagayan Valley and Northern Luzon.

PAGASA has already warned that typhoon Chedeng may bring heavier rains compared to typhoon Milenyo, that’s why we must double our efforts to assure the public safety and to assure immediate rescue and relief operation during calamity." Public Works Secretary Rogelio Songa said.

In September 2011, the organization will host the 2nd Rizal Youth Leadership Institute, an annual leadership training workshop for high school and college students. About 52 young people, guests and Knights of Rizal members attended last year’s event which was held at Leeward Community College.

In his directive, NDRRMC Director General Raul Bacalzo has also ordered the DPWH and local government units to help in the evacuation of affected areas as well as in the deployment of personnel in evacuation areas to assist local government and civil defense authorities.

Local police forces were also tasked to coordinate closely with the DPWH and local government units for clearing operations and assistance in medical and relief operations.

Operations at Tabaco City RORSO ferry terminals were suspended as of Tuesday, stranding some 350 passengers and 11 vehicles.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) in Sorsogon boosted its disaster preparation especially in the ports of Pilar, Bulan and Matnog towns, while repeatedly reminding seafarers to avoid sailing in rough seas.

Sorsogon PCG chief Ronnie Ong said that as early as 10 a.m. today, he already advised port officials in the three municipalities to suspend the departure of vessels.

He also stated that the in the province has maintained partner- ship with local shipping companies and operators to provide assistance for rescue in the event of a sea mishap.

“We usually implement pre-ventive and precautionary measures in the conduct of our operation especially those vessels that are about to depart are strictly made to undergo mandatory pre-departure inspection to see if these vessels are sea worthy and safe for carrying or transporting passengers,” he said. (www.philstar.com)
Farrington’s Girls Water Polo Team (first row, wearing leis): Principal Al Carganilla (far left) and Coach Eric Polivka (second from right) receive an honorary certificate from members of the Honolulu City Council.

Farrington's Girls Water Polo Team

City Council Honors Farrington Girls Water Polo Team

by Dennis GAULO

THE HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL RECENTLY HONORED a small but tenacious group of Kalihi kids as a memorial inaugural sports season.

Interestingly enough, Farrington High School’s girls water polo team was not lauded for winning a state championship or a division title. In fact, they didn’t win a single game. Instead, they were honored for their never-say-die attitude that not only carried them through a grueling season but also won over the hearts of legions of admirers and fans.

Their season began with 14 players whom Coach Eric Polivka convinced to try out for the team. However, only a few of them were experienced swimmers. When the girls found out how difficult of a sport water polo is, half of them quit. When the season started, they had only 7 players, which is the bare minimum required to play water polo—a sport that some say is the most physically-demanding of all.

NEVER QUIT

So how difficult is it to play water polo? Well, imagine having to swim for an entire hour as if you’re being chased by a great white shark. That’s just the beginning of a training session for most water polo teams.

You’re constantly swimming, treading water and fighting for control of a very slippery ball. Opponents are grabbing your arms, torso, swimsuit and legs. You get kicked, punched and elbowed under water, but no penalties are called because it’s all part of the game. And there are no rest periods in water polo, unlike rugby, football or hockey.

Also, water polo is a sport that’s best suited for taller, lanky players. By local standards, this means persons at least 5 feet, 9 inches tall. Most of Farrington’s team was barely over 5 feet tall. Their smallest player, who stands 4 feet, 9 inches tall, is so small that some opponents confused her for the ball.

The girls were at a tremendous disadvantage but they still played their hearts out.

During the first game, two of the girls were so exhausted they threw up in the pool. Another girl was so exhausted that she had to float on her back and rest while the match continued. Others clung to the side of the pool and rested while the opponent scored point after point.

When they were short a player, Coach Eric would ask the other team to play rather than forfeit the game. Opposing teams would even lend them players to give the girls more practice.

After awhile, the opposing teams’ players and fans couldn’t help but cheer for this determined group of girls from Kalihi. And something else happened—they began to get better!

Five games into the season, they scored their first point in a 2-1 loss to Aiea. In their final game of the season, they scored 7 points in a 16-7 loss to Castle. By that time, the girls could swim the entire game. They scored the most points they had all season and had a blast doing so. Their remarkable attitude captured the hearts and minds of many people who admired these Kalihi kids who never gave up trying. Donations, letters of support and well-wishes poured in from everywhere.

One of their biggest fans was Principal Al Carganilla. He really took responsibility, resilience, extraordinary effort and courage to get through what they went through, “he says. “They stuck it out the entire season. It’s a tribute to their determination and character to finish out the year.”

Carganilla says that all too often, athletic greatness is based on wins and losses. In Farrington’s case, the girls learned teamwork, overcoming personal fears and having pride in themselves, their school and the community—all of which overshadowed mere winning or losing.

“These young women will take these great values that they gained from this season with them forever. These lessons learned will be building blocks for them in any endeavor that they pursue,” he says.

HONORARY CERTIFICATE

Upon reading about the team in a local media report, City Councilmember Romy Cachola decided to formally recognize their efforts with an honorary certificate presentation at City Hall.

“When I first read about these remarkable girls, I was amazed at how they persevered through adversity and never gave up, he says. “Many of us can identify with these girls. We know what it’s like to face the giants in our life or to struggle financially, especially in these trying times. I wanted to honor these girls because I too faced similar difficult situations in life.”

As a newly-arrived immigrant to Hawaii from the Philippines, Cachola says he experienced cultural and language barriers while looking for a job. But he never gave up and even after landing his first job as a legal messenger for a financial institution, continued to work hard to improve himself.

“I looked for opportunities to advance myself,” Cachola says. “I worked on Saturdays to manage the branch when no one else wanted and volunteered to cover for co-workers when they went on vacation. In a little over a year, I had learned everyone’s assignments and went from a messenger to branch manager.”

The Magnificent Seven are: Rizane Bumanglag, Ashley Cambe, Jasmine Dela Cruz-Retana, Alyssa De Gracia, Jovelyn Luab and Nyein Sanbodh.

Cachola says that Farrington’s girls water polo team should serve as an inspiration for others who may consider themselves the “underdog” in the game of life.

The next time you find yourself in a bind and you’re forced to tread water just to keep afloat, I want you to think of these girls, Cachola says. “Sure, these girls are under-sized and overlooked. But they have learned an important secret in life—always try your best and never give up no matter what.”

Results of 2011 Neighborhood Board Elections

THE CITY’S NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION OFFICE (NCO) released the results of the 2011 Neighborhood Board elections, which shows several Filipino candidates winning seats to various boards across Oahu, including Chronic’s very own Danny De Gracia II.

De Gracia’s 728 votes were enough to earn him a seat on the Waipahu Neighborhood Board No. 22. A partial list of other notable Filipinos who won their election include: Baybee Huahana-Abian, Roger Clemente and Roger Olegario (Pearl City); Marissa Capelouto and Jacinto Legal (Manila/Kapolei/Honokai Hale); Constante Domingo (Aliamanu/Foster Village/Salt Lake); Jason Espero and Ariel De Jesus (Ewa); Luella Costales (Makaihi/Maula/Launani Valley); Connie Herolaga, Edmund Alfonso, Lorraine Duhaylonsod and Emerito Sanitan (Waipahu); Rodolfo Ibay and Gloricone Rize (Kalihi-Palama);Felipe San Nicolas (Kaneohe) and Lynn Vasquez-Dela Cerna (Aiea).

The election filled 379 of the 442 seats. The remaining 60 did not have candidates. The respective boards may appoint qualified residents to fill those vacancies once the new term begins on July 1, 2011.

The list of vacancies and full election results are available on the NCO website at: http://www1.honolulu.gov/nco/.
Pinoys Find Happiness in World’s Happiest Country

by Jeremalm M. Opiniano

S

he found happiness in a region clutched in a drug trade. But Maricel Piniero discovered it not in acid-laden joys but in finding Filipinos, an extreme rarity in this Latin American country.

She blurted in Tagalog “dahil sa tuwa” (out of joy) when she saw several Filipinos who traveled 19,000 miles from Manila for a global conference at the posh Universidad de los Andes in Bogota, Colombia’s capital. They were the first Filipinos Piniero met after leaving Manila 10 months ago. They were also the first she traded dance steps with at the lively Andres Carne de Res bar.

Piniero’s disposition may lend credence to studies on overseas migration and happiness that says people from “unhappy” countries may be motivated to migrate to a “happier” country. Vice versa, people from happy countries are said to be less motivated to move elsewhere.

A 2009 study by U.S. researchers Linnea Polgreen and Nicole Simpson noticed a unique result—the happiest countries had increasing emigration rates, as net migration rates increase in the happiness of the destination country.

Optimism has something to do with people’s willingness to take advantage of better opportunities overseas, the two theorized, using 24 years worth of data from the World Values Survey.

“One explanation is that migrants from happy countries are more optimistic than people in less happy countries and people in happier countries are more optimistic about life in general and the possibilities that exist outside of their country,” say Polgreen and Simpson.

Even while insurgency prevails in Colombia and policemen are found on every street corner of the capital, surveys by the WVS Association, the Happy Planet Index by the new economics foundation and the happiness index by the Gallup World Poll, consistently showed that Colombia is a happier country than the Philippines. In contrast, data by the World Bank on international migration showed that the Philippines had more migrants and migrant remittances than Colombia.

Pinoys’ PINING

Frying pans and old wine bottles hanging on the ceiling swayed as Latin music filled the Andres Carne de Res bar. It was Piniero’s first time here, which is 30 kilometers north of Bogota. She partied all night.

“Some of my friends here and in the Philippines love to dance, which I do, too,” says Piniero, an assistant professor at the Universidad de los Andes, which is equivalent to Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines.

She had been in Colombia for seven months but was unable to meet a compatriot—even in Catholic churches here. According to recent Philippine government data, less than 100 Filipinos are in Colombia. The government estimates 24,407 Filipinos, mostly contract workers, are scattered in 48 countries throughout Latin America, which includes Central America and the Caribbean.

The region offers a lot of things that can make a Filipino happy—food, recipes, different foods, Latin music and dance,” says Piniero, a Philippine-trained anthropologist.

UTILITY

Another reason for the optimism from overseas migrants may have to do with a person’s aim for self-improvement. Migration decisions, according to Polgreen and Simpson, may see people compare their utility—i.e., talent, skills and income opportunities—of living in the home country with the utility of living abroad. Happiness then follows.

“If the utility of living abroad exceeds the utility of staying home net of migration costs such as distance, language, or the family left behind, the person will move abroad. Happiness captures something meaningful about utility,” say Polgreen and Simpson.

Not that Piniero is lonelier in this Latin American country. She admits to being homesick at times. But she is accustomed to traveling. Professional advancement brought her first to the U.S., and then to Ecuador, her first Latin American country sojourn.

After acquiring a doctorate from the University of Georgia in Atlanta, research projects in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador followed. Tuckered out, Piniero went home to the Philippines and realized her dream. And she secured a financially-professionally-rewarding job as dissertation adviser of hers forwarded a job as assistant professor under the Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios sobre Desarrollo—the Universidad de los Andes’ research arm for interdisciplinary studies in development.

Piniero’s earnings alone reveal her utility as she occasionally sends money to her parents and siblings in the Philippines. For her, Latin America is an interesting region to be in.

“As an anthropologist, it’s more satisfying to work in a country which enjoys cultural different from our own,” Piniero says.

Still, on the day that she was with compatriots who endured an over 30-hour plane ride to Colombia, Piniero and her countrymen were more than satisfied. And they partyed all night in one of the happiest countries in the world—drug-free.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Farrington Students to Compete in National Health Conference

WHILE MOST FARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS are enjoying a summer break, members of the school’s Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) Chapter are gearing up for a national conference next month in Anaheim, California.

Earlier this year, Farrington’s HOSA Chapter won numerous awards and recognition at the 2011 State Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Conference held February 23-24 at the Hawaii State Convention Center. In total, the Farrington Chapter garnered 21 medals and earned the right to represent Hawaii in the national competition this summer. A total of 24 Farrington students will participate in leadership workshops at the national conference and hopefully continue their winning streak.

The awardees include:

• Maureen Gante, 1st place, Extemporaneous Writing
• Stephanie Cassel, 2nd place, CPR/First Aid
• Melanye Takashima, 3rd place, CPR/First Aid
• Jarin Loristo, 2nd place, Medical Spelling
• Rose Baci-an and Alene Inven- tion, 2nd place, CPR/First Aid
• Krizelle Magdirila, 2nd place, Medical Terminology
• Diana Simon and Glady Baloran, 3rd place, Community Awareness
• Tere Membrere and Jiro Manog, 2nd place, Community Awareness
• Anessa Jones, State Historian

Farrington students pose with their awards at the 2011 State Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Conference held February 23-24 at the Convention Center

(continued on page 7)
The company has been accused of deception and misleading advertising by the FTC. According to the FTC, the defendants advertised their acai berry weight-loss products online using deceptive free trial offers. These offers claimed that consumers would lose weight quickly and easily with the use of acai berry supplements. However, the FTC has found that these claims are not based on scientific evidence and are misleading to consumers.

In reality, the websites are deceptive advertisements placed by third-party or “affiliate” marketers. The websites are aimed at enticing consumers to buy the featured acai berry weight-loss products. These fake news operations are the subject of a nationwide law enforcement initiative.

Deceptive online ads for the acai berry weight loss products can be found posing to be from popular outlets like ABC, Fox News, CBS, CNN, USA Today and Consumer Reports. According to the FTC, the defendants collectively have paid more than $1 million to advertise their fake news sites but have failed to deliver on their promises.

The FTC has warned consumers to be wary of phony “news” announcements of free trial offers for online diet pills. Before signing up for any free trial offer, read the fine print carefully and always check the company out with BBB. You’ll need an excellent – not merely a derivative beneficiary. The lawyer must be able to convince the judge that your positive equities outweigh the negative factors.

Bankruptcy A Negative Factor

In the case of this child, he had a number of positive equities – lived in the U.S. for more than 7 years, had a pregnant wife who was a green card holder, had a U.S. born child, had a job, had no criminal record, and paid taxes. The only negative factor in his life – he and his wife had filed for bankruptcy. He had borrowed money to buy a car and then lost his job. He was advised by the usual ignoramuses that he could save his car by filing for bankruptcy. His car was repossessed anyway and now is car less.

The wife testified that they had also borrowed $6,000 to pay for a birthday party for their infant child and which they sought to be excused through bankruptcy. The judge was shocked at this display of extravagance and irresponsibility. He denied relief and ordered the alien deported. Actually, the $6,000 was sent to a relative in the Philippines who had a medical problem. Why the wife did not tell the truth is inexplicable. It would have looked better in the eyes of the judge if she had told the truth – it was used for humanitarian aid.

So they will move for reconsideration or appeal. Who knows what the outcome will be. They will need more money to pay an attorney. And suffer more mental anguish and anxiety. All because they did not tell the truth.

FORTHCOMING ARTICLES

YOU WILL ENJOY READING: Barack’s “playboy” father’s immigration problem – and how we could have solved it. Barack’s buddy and Fil-Ams nabbed in world’s oldest profession reusing sting

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. Office: 800 Bethel St., Suite 402, Honolulu, HI 96813. Tel: (808) 225-2643. E-Mail: flanlaw@yahoo.com. Websites: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com, and www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. Listen to the most witty, interesting, and informative radio program in Hawaii on KNDI at 1270, AM dial every Thursday at 7:30 a.m., rebroadcast at www.iluko.com.)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

BBB Warns Public of Acai Berry Weight Loss Scam

THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU AND THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION are warning consumers to be wary of phony “news” announcements of free trial offers for online diet pills. According to the FTC, millions of consumers are being lured to websites that imitate reputable news organizations. The “reporters” on these sites have supposedly obtained relaxation of the U.S. immigration law.

Deceptive online ads for the acai berry weight loss products can be found posing to be from popular outlets like ABC, Fox News, CBS, CNN, USA Today and Consumer Reports. According to the FTC, the defendants collectively have paid more than $1 million to advertise their fake news sites but have failed to deliver on their promises.

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COMMUNITY PARADE

19TH ANNUAL FILIPINO FIESTA
Saturday, May 7, 2011

THE SIGHTS, SMELLS & SOUNDS OF 2011 FILIPINO FIESTA
Quickie in Marseille

by Manny GONZALES, Plantation Bay Resort & Spa

MANILA, Philippines - When I mentioned to a European friend that I was going to Marseille, he rolled his eyes expressively. “Why?”

This is about the reaction you can expect from a lot of people, but if everything you know about Marseille is what you learned from The French Connection (in which it was depicted as a crime-infested Drug Dealers’ Central), have I got news for you.

Thinking I was just going to rest a couple of days between a trip to Spain and a jaunt around Provence, I had booked my hotel blind, and was pleasantly surprised to find out that it was right on the edge of Marseille’s Vieux Port (vyeh-pohrrr). This turned out to be the largest sailboat harbor in the world (see picture).

Within the Vieux Port, it is easy to forget that you are in France’s second largest city, and easy to imagine that you are in a quaint seaside village which just happens to have about 2000 boats in its harbor (see picture).

On my first day, it was sunny but cold, so I just walked around, enjoying the spectacle of sailboats gliding by with women on them who probably would have looked great topless, but regrettably were wrapped up in thick coats. The U-shaped boulevard, which annoyingly keeps changing name (Quai de this, Quai de that), was lined with bars, cafes, and hotels. It soon became clear that absolutely the thing to do in Marseille on a chilly spring day is to sit at a sidewalk café, order a beer (a coffee would ice up in minutes), and face the sun with as much of your body as possible.

So I did.

For people with more sophisticated literacy leanings than The French Connection, Marseille is also associated with Alexandre Dumas’s novel The Count of Monte Cristo, the story of a man who is unjustly imprisoned, escapes, recovers the fortune a fellow-prisoner had told him about, and slowly gets even with everyone who was mean to him. (At least, this is what I gathered from the Classics Illustrated comic book; the actual novel comprises two thick volumes, and I had better things to do in my adolescent years.

Most French people claim that they read it. You may wish to take such claims with a grain of salt.)

Anyway, in the book the protagonist was supposedly imprisoned in the Chateau d’If, which despite being called a chateau is actually Marseille’s answer to Alcatraz — a prison on a small island several miles from shore. Provence, of which Marseille is a part, used to be an independent kingdom but then got bullied into joining France, so the people of Provence always had an uneasy relationship with the central government. Hence, the Chateau d’If and several other fortifications in the area were built by ferry, and it is totally worth the price. Therefore, I also recommend this boat ride — just don’t expect to be able to move around near the toilets. Bring a sandal and the clearest water you ever saw.

Another cruise you can take from the Vieux Port is the Calanques (kuh-LANK) tour. Being both enterprising and gullible, I took it.

The Calanques are coves — small inlets that sort of look like fjords, but are fjord dropouts, if you will. A few were a little more extensive, but honestly, several orders of magnitude removed from Norwegian proportions.

Instead of jostling for seats in the front, as I foolishly did, find a nice quiet seat in the back. Not only will you be able to move around without climbing over fat ladies sitting on the deck, you will also be closer to the toilets. Bring a sandwich and a Coke, as the cruise takes three hours and they don’t serve anything on board. Guidebooks and cruise advertising posters will try to give you the impression that a calanque is like a Norwegian fjord, except for being in France. (A fjord is a deep and long inlet that was carved by glaciers, and most fjords are pretty substantial geographical features — just look at a map of Norway.)

However, some of these calanques were barely wide enough to beach a rowboat. For people with more sophisticated literary leanings than The French Connection, Marseille is a part, used to be a junior fjord. A very junior fjord. A fjord dropout, if you will. Some of these calanques were barely wide enough to beach a rowboat. A few were a little more extensive, but honestly, several orders of magnitude removed from Norwegian proportions.

The only trouble with d’If is that it is decomposing” and has TVs scattered around, apparently playing every single movie version of The Count of Monte Cristo ever made, including one (I think) in Bulgarian.

The Chateau d’If and several other fortifications in the area were built by ferry, and it is totally worth the journey. The Island is surrounded by the clearest water you ever saw, and the prison itself, though there is not much to it, is full of helpful signs — “the cell where General Kleber’s body was kept for two years, slowly decomposing” and has TVs scattered around, apparently playing every single movie version of The Count of Monte Cristo ever made, including one (I think) in Bulgarian.

I hope you enjoyed this; you’re welcome.

The Vieux Port of Marseille is about the size of 10 football fields.

The Vieux Port of Marseille is about the size of 10 football fields.

(continued on page 10)
Nueva Vizcaya: Philippines' Next 'Salad Bowl' Capital

by Delon PORCALLA
Thursday, May 26, 2011

NUEVA VIZCAYA, Philippines – AN UP-LAND TOWN OF NUEVA VIZCAYA PROVINCE is emerging as the next salad bowl capital of the country, the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported today.

This after five villages of Dupax del Sur town push to grow semi-temperate vegetables that can compete well with those from Benguet and the Cordilleras.

Among the crops that the villages tapped are lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, sweet peas, chayote, cucumber, tomatoes, and bell pepper. They also grow other crops like squash, ginger, corn and adlai.

To date, the DA has already extended a total of P13 million in operating capital, trading post, irrigation, tramline, and other equipment for the program that is expected to develop some 1,500 hectares of farmlands in the province.

Last week, the agriculture department turned over close to P7 million in various assistance and interventions to some 200 farmer-residents in the area.

Part of the P7 million fund is a P3.5 million operating fund from the DA's Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC); P3.2 million for irrigation facilities and a tramline; P50,000 worth communication facilities; and a pair of carabaos to help in land preparation.

The amount is the second tranche of aid extended by the DA to the farmers.

Nueva Vizcaya is Cagayan Valley's vegetable capital. In particular, Dupax Del Sur is the main vegetable producer.

My hotel in Marseille was well-located and had bright, friendly staff, many of them fairly pleasing to the eye. (I managed to spend 20 minutes checking in.) Their restaurant overlooked the harbor, which was truly stunning by both day and night, and served a decent breakfast to boot. My room was modern and spacious, and everything worked. There was just one small problem... I will not bore you by explaining the problem, but, trust me, this hotel is unlikely to satisfy the needs of most readers who may happen to pass by Marseille.

But do, indeed, pass by Marseille. The old town is not only picturesque, but also bustling with activity throughout the day. Find your own hotel in the Vieux Port, take the boat tours, and bail on the bouillabaisse, and you will be glad you discovered this under-appreciated Mediterranean gem.

(www.philstar.com)
China Builds More Spratly Outposts

by DJA, ANA, News

MANILA. Philippines - CHINA HAS SET UP MILITARY GARRISONs and outposts within Philippine-claimed territory in the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

Documents and photographs obtained by News5 show that the military garrisons and outposts are located on six reefs that are part of the Kalayaan Island Group. Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam are claiming the Spratlys either entirely or in part. The Spratly Islands are located within an area of 150,000 square miles and are made up of some 200 islands, reefs and shoals.

The Aquino administration is expected to push for diplomatic solutions to the dispute as well as joint economic development of the area. But a political analyst said Manila should not surrender its sovereignty and should turn to the international community for help.

The Philippines is claiming only a portion of the Spratlys, known as the Kalayaan Island Group, located in a 9,000-square-mile area and made up of 54 islands, reefs, and shoals.

Included in the Kalayaan Group is Pagasa, also known as Thitu Island, the second biggest island in the Spratlys. The Philippines has an airstrip and maintains a small community on Pagasa Island as well as garrisons in eight other islets. Vietnam occupies 23 islets while China and Malaysia occupy seven each.

The Kalayaan Island Group is part of the province of Palawan and is within the 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone of the Philippines.

Documents show that of the seven Chinese-occupied islands, six are located well within the Kalayaan Island Group. The military garrisons and outposts were located at Kagitingan (Ferry Cross) Reef, Caldenor (Cuarteron) Reef, Gaven Reef, Zamora (Subi) Reef, Chigua (Dong Men Jiao) Reef and Panagbanan reef, better known as Mischief Reef.

At Kagitingan Reef, China built a permanent communications and maritime observatory garrison that can house 200 troops. China built a helicopter landing pad, a 300-meter-long wharf allowing supply ships and patrol boats to dock, a two-storey barracks and a 500-square-meter plantation area. Beijing designated the Kagitingan Reef as its main command headquarters as it is equipped with satellite data transmission, surface and air search radars. This garrison is armed with at least four high-powered naval guns and several gun emplacements.

China built permanent reef fortresses and supply platforms at the Caldenor, Gaven and Chigua reefs. These supply platforms can resist winds up to 71 knots and are equipped with VHF / UHF communications equipment, search radars as well as naval guns and anti-aircraft guns. These three supply platforms can also serve as docks for Chinese navy patrol boats.

At Zamora Reef, China has built a permanent reef fortress and supply platform that can house 160 troops. This garrison has a helicopter and is armed with four twin barrel 37-millimeter naval guns.

Documents also show that China has built up its facilities at Panganban Reef. In 1985, Manila and Beijing had a diplomatic dispute when China started building structures on the reef. At that time, China said the structures were shelters for its fishermen but questions were raised as the “shelters” were equipped with satellite communications and radars.

Panganban Reef now has four building complexes with 13 multi-storey buildings. Fifty Chinese Marines are permanently stationed there and are equipped with satellite communications equipment. China has undertaken several lagoon construction activities at Panganban Reef. The construction of additional facilities at Panganban Reef is apparently aimed at establishing pre-positioned bases in the South China Sea, enabling Beijing to project its influence and power in the disputed islands.

Documents also show that apart from the military garrisons and outposts, China is aggressively pursuing large-scale maritime projects aimed at cementing its claim on the Spratlys. These projects include construction of port facilities, airports, navigation buoys, light-houses, ocean observatories and maritime meteorology networks.

President Aquino had recently voiced the idea of claimant countries jointly developing Spratlys’ resources - and sharing in the benefits. Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin says this a “good idea,” adding that a good neighbor policy may be the best way to resolving the dispute.

In a proposal of the President is why don’t we come up with some sort of consortium where all the claimant countries are putting up their resources for a particular project in these areas?” Gazmin explained. “For whatever proceeds we get - we divide, we share equally, which is a very good idea.”

But Gazmin said this was just an idea of the President. “It’s just one of his (President Aquino) ideas.”

“If that is one way of resolving the issue peacefully and at the same time earning from it, not fighting but earning and sharing resources - I guess that is a friendly neighborhood,” he said.

Gazmin said any “intrusions” into the Philippine territory would be dealt with diplomatically.

Last March 2, 2011, Manila filed a protest over China’s alleged intrusion into Philippine waters where Chinese Navy patrol boats “harassed” the MV Ventas Voyager, a Philippine oil exploration ship.

Political analyst Dindo Manhit of Stratbase stressed Manila should not surrender its sovereignty. While admitting the Philippines is militarily weak, Manhit said Manila can turn to the international community to exert pressure on China or any other claimant country.

H AWAI I FILO PINO CHRONICLE - NEWS EDITION

Jobless Pinoyos Now 11.3 M

by Helen FLORES

MANILA, Philippines - THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED FILIPINOS ROSE by 1.4 million to 11.3 million in March from 9.9 million in November last year, according to the latest survey by polling firm Social Weather Stations (SWS).

This is a 3.7 percentage point increase to the unemployment rate of 27.2 percent in March from 23.5 percent in the previous quarter. On a year-on-year comparison, the unemployment rate rose a tenth of a percentage point in March from 27.1 percent in March 2010. SWS conducted face-to-face interviews of 1,200 representative adults aged 18 years old and above from March 4 to 7.

The latest National Statistics Office’s Labor Force Survey showed that the country’s unemployment rate rose to 7.4 percent (2.9 million) in January from 7.3 percent (2.8 million) in the same period last year.

SWS said unemployment has been high since May 2005. It fell below 20 percent only three times—the last time was in September 2010 when the rate was 18.9 percent.

The two surveys conducted by SWS showed that adult unemployment was primarily composed of those who quit their jobs or were re-trenched. Nine percent of the present unemployment rate were composed of people who had lost their jobs while 10 percent had voluntarily left work. Some 27 percent were first-time jobseekers.

Of the nine percent who lost their jobs, seven percent did not get their contracts renewed, one percent belonged to companies that stopped operating, and one percent were laid off.

SWS defines unemployed persons as those who are “not working and at the same time looking for work.”

Since 2005, the official definition of unemployment has been persons who are disposed to work and are actively looking for employment.

Not included in the definition are persons available for work but are not actively seeking jobs for reasons such as tiredness/belief no job is available, awaiting results of an application, temporary illness/disability, bad weather and waiting for rehire/recall.

The SWS survey, published in the newspaper BusinessWorld yesterday, has sampling error margins of plus or minus three percentage points for national and plus or minus six percentage points for area percentages.
MANILA, Philippines - THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DepED) BARED YESTERDAY the declining achievement rates in the past years of elementary and high school students nationwide.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro presented graphs showing a downward trend representing achievement levels and survival rates of elementary and high school students. The graphs were part of his report on the state of basic education at the National Education Summit held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati.

DepEd records showed a declining achievement level of elementary and high school students based on National Achievement Tests (NAT) results from 2005 to 2010.

"In previous years, we have always heard rosy statistics from DepEd about the supposed improving achievement levels. Now, we see the true picture of the ugly state of affairs," Tirso said.

"These are bleak statistics that should be highlighted to force the government to take action to arrest the deterioration of the state of education by allotting more resources to the next education level," Tirso said.

Luistro also presented their ambitious K-12 Basic Education Curriculum program as one of their main solutions to improve the learning competencies of Filipino graduates and raise their chances of getting employed.

"I am glad that we were able to prevent our countrymen from leaving the country and falling victim to illegal recruitment," Binay said. "We have conducted campaigns to combat illegal recruitment, and this has translated into either a decline in wages or an increase in unemployment if there is no comprehensive policy on reproductive health and family planning on our part."
by Reuben S. SEGURITAN

Immigrant workers facing significant backlogs in their adjustment of status applications (I-485) because of the visa retrogression may change jobs when certain eligibility requirements are met. These requirements are spelled out under the American Competitiveness in the 21st Century Act (AC21) which was passed in 2000. The I-485 application must have been pending for 180 days or more and the new job is in the "same or similar occupational classification" as the job for which the employment-based immigrant visa petition (EB1, EB2 or EB3) was filed.

The 180-day period refers to calendar days and begins from the date the I-485 application was received by the USCIS according to the petition receipt notice.

The same or similar occupational classification condition is a little less black and white. A recent guidance from the USCIS dated April 7, 2011, clarified that in determining whether this requirement is met, the USCIS will look at the totality of the circumstances and compare several factors. These factors include but are not limited to the job duties of both positions, the SOC codes for the position in the I-140 petition and for the new position, and the wages associated with each position.

The SOC code pertains to the Standard Occupational Classification system used by the Department of Labor in grouping and classifying jobs and occupations. Occupations are generally categorized on the basis of type of work performed, as well as the skills, education and training required to perform the job. There are currently 840 detailed occupations under which all workers fall. These are categorized into 461 broad occupations, 97 minor groups and 23 major groups.

As an example, a physical therapist position is assigned the SOC code of 29-1123. The first two digits [29] represent the major group of health care practitioners and technical occupations (which includes physicians, pharmacists and dentists); the fourth and fifth digits [11] refer to the broad occupation of therapists (which includes occupational therapists and speech pathologists); and the last digit [3] represents the detailed occupation of physical therapists.

The USCIS has said it will analyze the SOC codes of the two jobs without necessarily matching any particular order of digits in the two codes.

According to a 2005 USCIS Memorandum on AC21, "a substantial discrepancy" in the wages of the two jobs may be a contributing factor in a denial when the evidence is considered in its totality, but officers are advised not to deny a case solely on the difference in wages.

Where the employee did not change employers but accepted a different position or received a promotion or demotion, the guidance states that the job duties must be sufficiently similar. The USCIS said that it will evaluate these situations on a case-by-case basis and with consideration to the totality of the circumstances.

Sometimes, both the I-140 petition and I-485 application remain pending for 180 days or more after they are concurrently filed. In such a case, the worker is not automatically entitled to portability. The USCIS must first review the I-140 petition and see if it is, or would be, approvable, before adjudicating the I-485 application to determine if the new position is the same or similar occupational classification.

Ambassador Cuisia Congratulates Filipino Teachers on the Vision of the Business

Ambassador Cuisia Jr. congratulates the President of the Filipino Teachers Association (FTA), the lawyer in the Philippines, for their hard work and their families.

The FTA has been bringing to many cities, including Cebu, Mandaue, Pangasinan, Manila, Camarines Norte and Leyte.

"Filipino-Americans are great examples of our best quality as a people: our generosity and compassion for our neighbor. Bantay Bata is proud to see, first hand, what this kind of love looks like all over the world," says Fabian.

To learn more about Bantay Bata and other programs of the ABS-CBN Foundation International, visit www.abscbnfoundation.org.
KM Food Products, a family-run enterprise based in General Santos City, manufactures innovative value-added tuna products without monosodium glutamate (MSG) and artificial coloring. With the health of consumers as their topmost consideration, KM Food Products avoids using these substances so their tuna products will provide maximum health benefits without sacrificing flavor.

“Our products retain their natural fish color without any artificial coloring or “smoking” process,” says KM Food Products’ marketing manager Khrisna Gabaldon. “Tuna or any processed fish undergoes a normal discoloration process—from fresh red to a pale color. Discoloration can be hidden through a “smoking” process, seasonings or any artificial coloring like achuete that are available on the market. But through our new technology and natural ingredients, we offer value-added tuna products that keep their natural color without discoloration.”

Since its introduction into the market, the company has won numerous awards for its value-added tuna products. Bagging the “Product Innovator of the Year” for the second time during the 5th Annual Yaman Awards of the Yaman Gensan in 2009, the company also won the Top Seller Award for Processed Food Category at the Philippine National Trade Fair in the same year. Its products are hand-picked by OFWs or their families to countries such as Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Hawaii, the US mainland, and the Middle East. A few balikbayan boxes sent to Vallejo, California, opened doors for negotiations to export the company’s products to California, USA.

After joining the National Trade Fair in 2008, the company evolved into being a top producer of value-added tuna products and innovative tuna processing. A regular exhibitor at the International Food Exhibition (IFEX), KM Food Products will join 19 other companies in the Partner Region Program (PRP) Pavilion. PRP is a project of IFEX that further promotes innovation and marketing of quality food products of small and medium enterprises. For the 8th IFEX Philippines, the Partner Region is Region 12 (SOUCKCARGEN). The PRP Pavilion is a gastronomic showcase where IFEX visitors can sample delectable dishes from General Santos City, along with the provinces of South Cotabato, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Sarangani.

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**FOOD & LEISURE**

**Name that Tuna at IFEX**

by Evelyn MACAIRAN

MANILA, Philippines - The health benefits of tuna have been highlighted worldwide over and it’s been included in diet regimens in the past years. Tuna contains Omega-3 fatty acids like DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid) and EPA (Eicosapentaenoic Acid) that are found to lessen the risk of cardiovascular diseases by decreasing triglyceride levels, slowing the growth rate of atherosclerotic plaque, and lowering blood pressure. An excellent source of protein, tuna is likewise packed with selenium, magnesium, potassium, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, niacin, and folic acid.

The Philippines is ranked as the 5th largest producer and a premier source of tuna in the world. Of the Philippine Center drew community leaders from various states to meet and greet the new envoy, Consul General Mario L. De Leon Jr. of the Philippine Consulate General in New York. Ambassador Cuisia with Consul General Mario L. De Leon Jr. of the Philippine Consulate General in New York.

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**MAINLAND NEWS**

**PH Envoy Gets Warm Welcome in NY**

by Momar VISAYA

NEW YORK—THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY OF NORTH-EAST USA ROLLED OUT the welcome mat Wednesday evening to Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose L. Cuisia. The event at the Kalayaan Hall of the Philippine Center drew community leaders from various states to meet and greet the new envoy, who assumed his post last April 2, 2011.

Ambassador Cuisia is barn-storming the United States to meet with various Filipino communities across the nation. Last week, he met with Filipino community leaders in Northern California and Las Vegas, Nevada where he addressed a conference of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA).

During the meet and greet with the community leaders, the ambassador expressed his thanks on behalf of the Philippine government for the continued support of Filipinos to Philippines by way of scholarship programs, medical missions, humanitarian endeavors, or even by sending in dollar remittances. He also called on the members of the community to unite as one.

"I might be too idealistic or too optimistic but I am hopeful that it will be refilled, and we are making to the fabric of American society, by way of the recognition of the Filipino Americans as a vibrant and potent political force," he said.

This can be demonstrated in many ways, among them getting Filipino Americans in elective office across the United States.
**Phl Re-elected to UN Human Rights Council**

**Manila, Philippines** – The Philippines was re-elected for a three-year term to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said yesterday.

The Philippine Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York reported to the DFA that the Philippines obtained the second highest number of votes in elections held at the 65th session of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

The country obtained 182 votes, two votes behind Indonesia. Geneva-based UN Watch, however, had questioned the membership of the Philippines in the UNHRC – along with Burkina Faso, India, and Indonesia – because of information provided by non-government organizations including Reporters Without Borders and Freedom House.

In its annual review of human rights practices worldwide, non-government group Human Rights Watch said the Philippine government engaged more in massive job losses not only in the HSW sector but also the deployment of skilled and professional workers to the kingdom, "with a five-man team from the Embassy are in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa to implement the contingency plan.

"The Embassy, hotline numbers for Yemen are +966-536-881-787. (DFA) www.philstar.com/"}

**OFWs to Lose Jobs in Saudi, Recruiters Warn**

**Manila, Philippines** – Recruitment industry leaders warned the government yesterday that many Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia might lose their jobs as a consequence of the continuing disagreement over the rules on hiring of Filipino domestic helpers, also called household service workers (HSWs).

Local recruiters said the country faces "serious repercussions" if the Philippine government refuses to accept the Saudi officials’ appeal to lower the minimum wage of HSWs from the current $400 being demanded by the Riyadh Labor Ministry.

"The uncompromising stand of the Saudi employers who have long standing relationship with Filipino recruitment agencies could be preserved by their government to stop hiring Filipinos or not renew existing contracts of OFWs even though our workers may be considered as among the highest paid non-Caucasian workers in that country," they added.

"The Embassy, hotline numbers for Yemen are +966-536-881-787. (DFA) www.philstar.com/"
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