

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

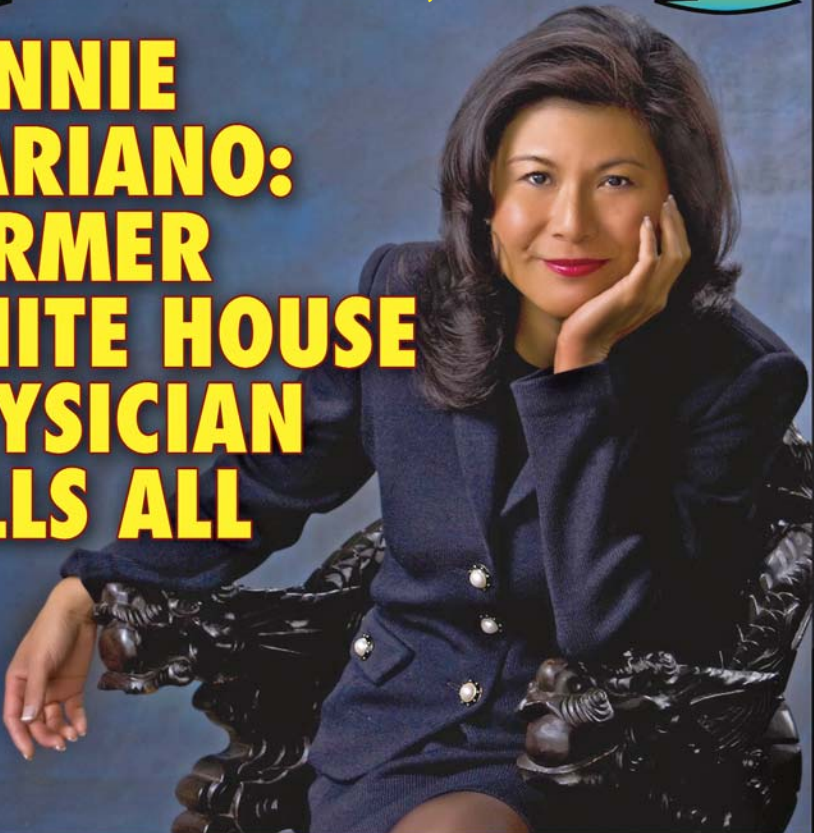
HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ MAY 22, 2010 ◆

CONNIE MARIANO: FORMER WHITE HOUSE PHYSICIAN TELLS ALL

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EDITORIAL

Her Patients Were Presidents

Though Washington, DC and Manila are thousands of miles and several time zones apart, a touch of the Philippines has been quite evident at the White House with two Filipinas holding prominent positions. They include Philippine-born and First Chef Cristina Comerford who has been whipping up delectable dishes for the First Family and its guests, and Dr. Connie Mariano, former resident doctor at the Oval Office, who is originally from the province of Cavite.

In terms of personal success stories, it doesn't get much better than Mariano's, the daughter of a former Filipino steward and master chef who served for 29 years in the U.S. Navy. Her father's side of the family was very poor and several members joined the Navy as a means to escape poverty. Mariano immigrated to the U.S. at the age of 2 and while growing up was taught by her parents the importance of such Filipino values as education, kindness, loyalty and humility.

Dr. Mariano's career as a naval officer and board-certified specialist in internal medicine has taken her around the globe aboard navy ships and Air Force One. She retired in 2001 from her position as personal physician to the president but not before having the opportunity of serving under the administrations of presidents George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Mariano holds the distinction of being the longest serving White House physician in American history as well as the first woman commander of the White House Medical Unit—no small feat considering her immigrant family's humble background.

She currently runs the Center for Executive Medicine, a unique medical practice designed for executives and their families who seek the highest standard of personalized and responsive medical care. Her company offers the same first-rate level of care that she provided for three chief executives, their families and visiting dignitaries at the White House.

We applaud Dr. Mariano for her accomplishments. She is an inspiration and living proof that no matter what background a person comes from, he or she can reach the very top—including leadership positions in the U.S. government or any career.

Tough Job Ahead for RPs' New President

To say that the president-elect of the Philippines has a big job ahead of him is quite an understatement. In fact, accomplishing the tasks that Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III has laid out will be nothing short of herculean.

Characterized as quiet and unassuming, Noynoy—the son of the late Benigno and Corazon Aquino—was voted into office under much of the same public euphoria that swept Barack Obama to victory two years ago. Noynoy, however, inherits quite a mess left behind by the previous administration, which was marked by corruption, political violence and growing mistrust of government. He has promised to establish a special commission to investigate and punish corrupt officials, including his predecessor and other "big fish." His campaign slogan was simple and direct—"When no one's corrupt, no one will be poor."

Noynoy's other priorities are to create more domestic jobs, boost foreign investment, curtail government spending, invest heavily in public education and restart peace talks with secessionist groups. He has already vowed to cut the number of out-of-country trips—a practice that his predecessor was well-known for. He will instead send lower-level officials to overseas meetings and limit the number of traveling companions, which at times included up to 80 during Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's term. It's a good start, but achieving real reform will require him to work with a potentially-hostile Congress composed of members from powerful political families as well as the businesses elite.

FROM THE PUBLISHER



loha and welcome to the latest issue of Hawaii's top Filipino community newspaper! With summer nearly upon us, the temperatures will start to rise. Have you noticed the gazillion little gnats that have been flying into our hair, nose and ears? We're not sure if it's due to global warming, but their numbers have increased exponentially this year. We'd like to hear from you if you have any suggestions on how to deal with these annoying little pests.



As for the recently-held elections in the Philippines, it sure looks like Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III has won the presidency. As we went to press, Aquino held a five million vote lead over his closest rival in the presidential race, former president Joseph Estrada. In a show of unity, boxing champ Manny Pacquiao, who handily won his own congressional race and who had supported Aquino's opponent Manny Villar, Jr., expressed his support for the president-elect and promised to support Aquino's agenda. Perhaps the nation's leaders can look to the "Pac Man" as a symbol of unity as the Philippines transitions from one administration to the next. In the coming weeks as Noynoy begins appointing members of his cabinet, we hope that he surrounds himself with those who are just as committed as himself to stamping out graft and leading the Philippines forward.

Our cover story for this issue is the inspirational story of Dr. Connie Mariano, the former presidential physician to three of America's chief executives. The daughter of a Navy father and Filipina mother, Mariano achieved an impressive list of "firsts" that included the first military woman to become the White House Physician to the President; the first woman Director of the White House Medical Unit; and the first Filipino American in U.S. history to become a Navy Rear Admiral. We hope that you are inspired by the cover story, written by Gregory Bren Garcia, which begins on page 4. If you want to learn more about this fascinating woman, we encourage you to pick up her new book entitled "The White House Doctor" which hits store shelves nationwide beginning June 22, 2010. The book can be pre-ordered on Amazon.com.

On a less serious note, popular Filipino-American comedian Rex Navarrete is returning to Hawaii. He is scheduled to perform at the Pipeline Café on May 28-29, 2010. The San Francisco-based stand-up comedian has gained a massive underground following and is a household name in many Fil-Am homes. Navarrete has performed his brand of comedy all at clubs all over the U.S., Canada, Europe and the Asia/Pacific region. His knack for telling jokes is sure to have audiences rolling from laughter. For ticket information, please read more on page 8.

We hope you will enjoy reading these and other articles in this jam-packed issue. In closing, we'd like to thank our readers for faithfully supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle these many years. Please feel free to contact us at filipinochronicle@gmail.com if you have concerns or questions regarding Hawaii's Filipino community. Until next time... *aloha and mabuhay!*

Chona A. Montesinos-Sonido

Still, if there is any reason for hope, just remember the results of the Philippines' first ever fully-automated election. Few gave the new system a chance to succeed, but by and large, it has surpassed expectations. Granted, there were bouts of violence and a few hiccups, but nowhere near the levels of previous elections.

In much the same way, we believe Noynoy can get the job done. It's for a moment like this that he been given the opportunity to lead and shine the brightest. The people of the Philippines have waited far too long for a president courageous enough to lead them forward. The time is now.

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The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle is published weekly by The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle Inc. It is mailed directly to subscribers and distributed at various outlets around Oahu and the neighbor islands. Editorial and advertising deadlines are three weeks prior to publication date. Subscriptions are available at \$75 per year for Oahu and the neighbor islands, continental U.S. \$80, foreign country \$90. Copyright 2010. The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle Inc. is located at 94-356 Waipahu Depot, Waipahu, HI 96737. Telephone (808) 678-8930. Facsimile (808) 678-1629. E-mail filipinochronicle@gmail.com. Website www.thefilipinochronicle.com. Opinions expressed by the columnists and contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle management. Reproduction of the contents in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the management. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

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COVER STORY

(From page 4, Dr. Connie...)

American of many "firsts." This includes being the first military woman to become the White House Physician to the President (1992), the first woman Director of the White House Medical Unit (1994) and the first Filipino American in U.S. history to become a Navy Rear Admiral (2000). She has cared for three U.S. Presidents—George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Writing a New Chapter in Life

In June 2001, after completing 24 years of active duty, Dr. Mariano retired from the Navy and the White House. From July 2001 to October 2005, she became a consultant in the Executive Health Program of the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona. Then in November 2005, Mariano founded the Center for Executive Medicine also in Scottsdale. It is a medical concierge practice that provides care mostly to corporate executives and their families. Its unique selling proposition?—medical care similar to what she provided to America's chief executives.

When asked how she spends her free hours these days, she gives a little laugh.

"Free time? What's that? I work full-time in my own medical concierge practice being available 24/7 to my patients who are mostly CEOs and their families. But I am contemplating several book projects for the future involving anti-aging, stress reduction and happy marriages," she says.

Mariano says she tries to afford as much time for leisure and relaxation as her busy schedule would allow her. "My pastimes include writing, running, traveling and retail therapy (i.e. shopping). I balance work and personal time like the presidents do, by putting them on my calendar. The president has on his calendar things like 'time for job, running, exercising' and so on. If I don't schedule it, it won't happen," she says.

Currently, Mariano is busy promoting her new book, "The White House Doctor," which offers a precise glimpse into the personal lives of the U.S. presidents through her own eyes.

"It will surprise you with the 'behind the scenes' events involved in taking care of the president and First Family," Mariano says. "Readers will be enlightened about the impact of the president's health on the nation, the

people involved in his care, what happens during the transition to a new president and the behind-the-scenes politics involved at the White House," she adds.

In the book, Mariano chronicles the glitzy moments of her career, including the times when she met the Pope and King Juan Carlos of Spain, as well as spending a night on Queen Elizabeth II's yacht. But her job as a physician to the U.S. president also involved enormous pressures. These included, among others, training with the Secret Service for AOP (Attack on the Principal) and water rescue drills, treating President Clinton's mother during her fight with breast cancer, treating First Lady Hillary Clinton for a blood clot and taking care of President Clinton when his leg was injured.

In Mariano's website, former Clinton thanks the doctor for her invaluable contributions to his family's health and welfare during his term.

"Throughout my entire presidency, Connie was at my side making sure I stayed healthy. She was with me during the happy and the sad times, as well as in the historic and private moments. I trusted her with my life and the lives of my family," Clinton says.

As a matter of fact, in "The White House Doctor," Mariano also writes about the controversies she became involved with simply by being the presidents' physician. For instance, she talks about the Monica Lewinsky scandal. It was Mariano who was tasked to take Clinton's blood sample in order to match it with the DNA contained on the semen stain found on Lewinsky's dress.

But ultimately, the book is a sterling chronicle about the life story of a person who underwent numerous trials before achieving success. It's a classic account of how metal can become tempered steel when cast into the fire.

Being a child of the diaspora experience, Dr. Mariano found herself battling with stereotypes both against women and minorities. She talks about the times when she felt herself being treated like a hired assistant, not a professional physician. She is even forthright about the more personal aspects of her life, like how the challenges of her job posed serious negative consequences on her personal relationships. In her book, she shares about the time she rushed to get President Clinton's family

Christmas presents and almost failed to get gifts for her own family. Mariano is frank even when talking about how her devotion for her work eventually took its toll on her marriage, which ended in divorce.

Looking Back with Gratitude

In the next few months, Dr. Mariano is scheduled to appear in several television and radio shows across the U.S., including New York, Washington D.C., Phoenix and Chicago. She's also due to appear in speaking engagements like in the upcoming 7th Annual International Women's Leadership Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii on September 21.

She will also be visiting Filipino establishments and events in the next few months. She'll be at the Philippine Expressions Bookshop in Rancho Palos Verdes, California on July 12, at the 16th Annual Gintong Panama Awards in Chicago, Illinois on July 31, and at the Pinoy Reporter Achievement Awards in SeaTac, Washington on October 9.

Is she proud of her Filipino ancestry? "Yes, very proud of my ancestry," says Mariano. "My book is truly an American story of how I, the daughter of a Filipino steward in the U.S. Navy, became a White House Doctor and ultimately the nation's first admiral of Filipino-American descent."

Mariano reveals that during times of trouble, she often looks back on the lessons instilled at an early age by her parents who played an important role in shaping her to become a strong-spirited person that she is today.

"The most important values imparted to me by my parents were humility, diligence, faith in God and gratitude," she says.

Dr. Connie Mariano

"Funny and touching—anyone interested in an intimate view through those corridors of power should read this book."
—Mary Kaye, author of
The Lion's Club and Lit



THE
**WHITE HOUSE
DOCTOR**

MY PATIENTS WERE PRESIDENTS—A MEMOIR

Foreword by FORMER PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Dr. Connie Mariano's new book, *The White House Doctor* offers a fascinating look into the lives of U.S. Presidents and chronicles her amazing story as one of the most influential physicians in the U.S.

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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

Inspire and Explore

encourage everyone to enjoy this year's celebration on Saturday, May 8 in Waikiki.

nspire

NASA has initiated an outstanding STEM education program for high schools called INSPIRE (Interdisciplinary National Science Program Incorporating Research Experience). The goal is to provide 9th-through 12th-grade students with both online and hands-on opportunities to explore education and career paths in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, with specific programs tailored to each grade level.

Applications for this pro-

gram are currently being accepted through June 30, 2010, and NASA will announce its selections in September.

Students admitted to the INSPIRE program will participate in an "online learning community" facilitating interaction with peers and NASA engineers/scientists in diverse educational activities, discussion boards and chat rooms. In addition, INSPIRE students will be able to apply for residential experiences at NASA facilities and participating universities nationwide (during the summer of 2011) that will afford unique introductions to multiple career options in aerospace.

Excited about this program? More detailed information on INSPIRE may be found online at: http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/descriptions/INSPIRE_Project.html

Explore

Space exploration holds tremendous potential for Hawaii. In 2007, I sponsored a bill, which became law, to create the State Office of Aerospace Development (OAD) to promote this industry. OAD, through its Director Jim Crisafulli, has done commendable work promoting aerospace in Hawaii. Through its tireless advocacy, our State has repeatedly played host to conferences of international aerospace scientists and entrepreneurs, and won legislative support for a federal spaceport license application to help bring space tourism to our islands.

OAD's efforts at the legislature helped pass another bill I initiated to fund a federal spaceport license application to help bring space tourism to our islands. In addition, OAD supported our State's efforts to establish the Big Island as the preferred site for both the Thirty Meter Telescope and Advanced Technology Solar Telescope projects, which collectively will bring nearly 1.5 Billion to Hawaii through international partnerships, providing substantial employment, research and educational benefits to Hawaii residents statewide.

OAD instituted the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) at the University of Hawaii at Hilo - a unique program dedicated to supporting scientific research, technology development, and pioneering education programs to advance space exploration and inspire the next generation of space scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs.

Initially funded through a bill I introduced in 2007, PISCES is built on global partnerships among industry, academia and the governments of space-faring nations. Over the past two years, PISCES has initiated innovative university and K-12 education programs on the Big Island, as well as sponsored international field demonstrations on the slopes of Mauna Kea to test new robotic technologies for future space missions. When fully developed, PISCES will feature a simulated lunar outpost on the Big Island where participants can conduct research and develop technologies toward working and living on the Moon and eventually Mars. The site will serve a dual function as an educational center for students, including K-12 pupils who can take a "Space Camp" field trip on the lunar analog site.

The OAD's latest "out-of-this-world" endeavor is PISA, the Pacific International Space Alliance. Being developed in collaboration with NASA Research Park at Ames Research Center in California, PISA will launch in November 2010, with the goal of facilitating collaboration among Asia and Pacific nations to design, develop, and implement both robotic and human missions to space. PISA will be headquartered in Hawaii, with OAD serving as its international Secretariat. Countries throughout Asia and the Pacific will contribute their funding and capabilities toward space exploration programs developed through PISA, which also will work closely with PISCES to foster innovation in scientific research, as well as the development, testing and evaluation of new technologies to support future space missions.

In sponsoring the bill to cre-

ate the Office of Aerospace Development, my colleagues and I envisioned the space industry as one that will provide many new research and education opportunities for our brightest and most talented residents. I hope to establish Hawaii as a major contributor to global space efforts, as well as expand our State's economic base with these high paying career opportunities. Having the energetic and dedicated Jim Crisafulli as the Director of the Office of Aerospace Industry is a blessing. Hawaii could not ask for a stronger advocate in this field.

The 2010 Legislature passed my resolution recognizing the strategic value of the aerospace industry in diversifying and strengthening Hawaii's economy. The industry possesses great potential for enhancing aviation safety and global security, improving health care diagnostics and delivery worldwide, and advancing the development and implementation of remote sensing and management of critical resources.

All four counties in Hawaii stand to gain from bolstering our aerospace potential. Kauai's Pacific Missile Range Facility already provides the world's largest multi-environment test and evaluation range for aerospace technologies. Mauna Kea is the world's premier astronomical observation site, with scientists from countries all over the globe competing for time to use the facilities. The Air Force Optical and Supercomputing Observatory on Maui supports the most sophisticated deep space surveillance complex in the U.S. Pioneering research in space-related fields is also being conducted through the UH-Manoa's Institute for Astronomy and Hawaii Institute for Geophysics and Planetology.

Hawaii's future potential in aerospace is even more promising, and I will continue to provide strong leadership through my work with other aerospace advocates and legislative efforts to ensure that we realize the substantial scientific, commercial and educational benefits this dynamic growth industry can bring to our State.

The Filipino Fiesta and Parade is a wonderful event that unites our community, showcases the history of the Philippines and Filipinos in Hawaii and underscores the importance of sharing our state's wonderful cultural diversity. The City and County of Honolulu is always pleased to be a co-sponsor and I

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OPINION



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

"One of the 'dangerous character traits' of a general is complacency."—Emmanuel S. Tipon, paraphrasing Sun Tzu in The Art of War.

Many in America can't understand why Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino who is from one party (Liberal) and Jejomar Binay who is from another (Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino) are winning the Philippine presidential elections. Filipinos have more freedom than Americans in electing their leaders. Filipinos can vote separately for President and Vice President. Americans cannot. They must vote for the Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates as a team.

Why Escudero promoted Noyn-Bi

"NOYBI" is the acronym for "Noynoy-Binay". Senator

What Every Filipino Should Know About "NOYBI"

Chiz Escudero is the godfather of NOYBI. Noynoy is Escudero's compadre. (Chiz's child is Noynoy's godchild). Mayor Binay is Escudero's good friend. Binay is the running mate of Joseph Estrada but he didn't vote for Binay claiming he couldn't see well without glasses. Mar Roxas is the running mate of Noynoy. If the partial results hold (Binay has an 800,000 vote lead over Roxas), the new Filipino leaders will be NOYBI.

Noynoy reportedly asked Escudero, a member of the Alpha Phi Beta fraternity (to which this writer belongs), to serve as a counterfoil to Frank Drilon and his Sigma Rho fraternity brods who were close to Mar and were lording it over the LP campaign. Escudero used his resources to promote NOYBI, saturating television with NOYBI commercials, to Mar's consternation.

If Mar had sought the Alphans' help, rather than the Sigma Rhoans, Escudero might have promoted NOYMAR not NOYBI. The Roxases had closer ties with the Alphans, since Gerardo Roxas, Mar's

dad, was a law partner of former SC Justice Abraham Sarmiento and ex-Sen. Leonardo Perez, Alphan stalwarts. Retired CJ Reynato Puno is also an Alphan.

Many believe Escudero promoted NOYBI because a VP Roxas would be a formidable rival for the presidency in 2016.

Bad Blood

There reportedly was bad blood between Kris Aquino and Korina Sanchez, Roxas' wife. Before Noynoy was a candidate, Kris was hearing make peace overtures to Korina about some misunderstanding.

According to Emil Jurado, the 'Stygian sisters' (like in the movie "Clash of the Titans") were not comfortable with Mar being a vice president because they felt Noynoy would be overshadowed by Mar, and were uncomfortable with the moneyed Aranetas (Mar's maternal family) who later stopped the funding. When Escudero announced NOYBI, the 'Stygian sisters' went all-out for Binay, junking Mar. Binay was acceptable because he was a Coryista. Cory appointed Binay

officer-in-charge of Makati from whence he rose to power. Roxas did not really become "yellow". He always wore a blue T-shirt which stuck out in a yellow sea. There was also some fear among the yellows that Roxas would be a dangerous vice president because he had presidential ambitions.

Binat Vat si Roxas

People didn't like Roxas for co-sponsoring the burdensome 12 percent value added tax (VAT). Roxas was seen on television clapping as President Arroyo signed VAT. Roxas was dubbed an Arroyo clapper.

Complacency

Polls showing Roxas ahead by as much as 30 percent over Loren Legarda plus the support of the Iglesia Ni Cristo and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, made the Roxas group complacent.

Everybody loves a lover

The expose that Binay had a mistress backfired. Everybody loves a lover. Legarda's supporters who believed their candidate could not win switched to Binay. In Binay, a commoner

from Cagayan who speaks Ilocano, they saw someone who could understand their needs and solve their problems. Binay's battle cry was: We will do for the Philippines what we are doing for Makati. I met Binay years ago at Sen. Pimentel's birthday party. He is a humble man with whom the poor can easily relate. Roxas belongs to the elite. Binay worked hard. When NOYBI caught fire, Binay worked harder. He denied a masked whistleblower's claim that he paid 1.4 billion to rig the elections for him and Noynoy.

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Laoag City. He has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He served as an Immigration Officer. He specializes in immigration and criminal defense. Tel. (808) 847 1601. Fax (808) 847 1624. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www. ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice for any specific person or situation. Neither the writer nor publisher warrant the completeness or accuracy of the information provided herein at the time of publication.)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

New Scholarship Available For Maui Students

Students from Maui who wish to pursue a career in the culinary arts will be able to do so, thanks to a generous \$25,000 gift from an anonymous donor.

Recent high school graduates from the Valley Isle are encouraged to apply for the Kapiolani Community College Maui Island Culinary Arts Scholarship, which will support a student who wishes to pursue a degree or certificate in the Culinary Arts program at KCC.

This new scholarship can be used for all costs associated with attendance including tuition, fees, books, supplies, meals, housing and one round trip inter-island airfare. It will provide aid to the student for two consecutive years toward

successful completion of an A.S. degree or certificate. Students who attended Henry Perrine Baldwin High School on Maui will be given first preference, followed by students from any other Maui high school.

The donor focused on KCC because of the school's multi-cultural student body and its culinary arts program successful track record, including winning the gold medal at the Western Regional competitions where KCC's team competed against nearly 200 culinary schools. The team then went on to win the national competition, earning KCC the title of the Best Culinary Institute in the U.S.

Please contact Malia Peters, director of scholarship development at 956-6311 or via email at: Malia.Peters@uhf.hawaii.edu for more details on this scholarship.

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FEATURE

Nothing Like Being Pinoy: Rex Navarrete's Brand of Comedy

By Fiedes Doctor

How do Filipinos eat their steak? With a spoon.

"We always find where the sharpest edge is," says Filipino-

American comedian Rex Navarrete in one of his "Rex and the City" acts.

This May 28-29, 2010 at the Pipeline Cafe, audiences can expect another dose of succinct observations on Filipino behavior—including a Manny Pacquiao rendition—in the unique Rex Navarrete flavor.

"There will be new routines like the life story of Manny Pacquiao, about Filipino families and quirky Filipino behavior and going back to the Philippines and living there," he says.

Navarrete's material comes from reality and shared experiences, and what he calls "real Rex moments."

"Even though most of my material is geared for a Filipino audience, if you're smart enough you'll understand the universal-

ity of it," he says, taking note of Jewish, African American and other comics going into mainstream. "I think everything has humor. I don't always make stuff up."

Doing comedy for the past 21 years, Navarrete has developed a routine from among a cast of characters ranging from his teacher, Mrs. Scott, to his Tito Boy and to Maritess, a domestic worker employed by the Super Friends. He uses this routine to air his thoughts on issues, usually related to the Filipino culture and way of life.

"I speak about our place in this world as Filipinos, how we are perceived like being in the background. We are one of the biggest Asian groups around the world and we have done a lot. I believe we deserve more credit than what we are being given," he says.

Maritess was a big internet hit in 2000 which catapulted him to more bookings especially in the Philippines and around Asia.

Navarrete remembers being funny at the age of two, while helping his grandmother tend to

her store near a seminary back in Cavite.

"I made the seminarians laugh," he says.

In Middle School, now in California, Eddie Murphy's "Comedian" introduced him to standup comedy and the art of storytelling. But it was in college in the San Francisco Bay area in 1989 at age 19 when he gave standup comedy a serious try in front of 800 people at the annual Asian Pacific Islander Student Union Conference at the University of California-Santa Cruz. Navarrete was on his way to becoming an architect—or so he and his parents thought—but a professor's insistence paved the road to a different calling.

"He told me, 'Get out of my office—you should be taking those jokes to the stage,'" recalls Navarrete, of his Asian American Studies professor Dan Gonzales.

Finally finding his funny bone, so to speak, Navarrete went on to perform across the nation. He toured colleges, universities and community events and became a household name in Filipino American homes. He

also toured in Asia, North America and Australia, and in Germany, Austria and Switzerland with Philippine recording artist Regine Velasquez.

He released his first comedy CD in 1998 entitled "Badly Brownd" followed by "Husky Boy" in 1999 and "Bastos" in 2001, which is under his own label Kakarabaw Productions. Other releases are "Hella Pinoy," his first ever live standup DVD concert, and "Badass Madapaka." In 2006, he had the "Rex and the City" airing over MTV Philippines and the animated series "The Nut Shack" over MYX and The Filipino Channel.

He recently released a DVD titled Komik Organik (2009), a recording of a live standup in San Jose, California.

Much of his act comes from keen observation, exposing himself to his environment and trying to figure out how Filipinos think, react and adapt.

"There is a lot of humor in our world," he says.

Navarrete's favorite acts are from ethnic comedians Chris Rock, Wanda Sykes, Dave Chapelle and George Lopez because they "talk from their her-

itage."

"One of the great things about being a standup is that you connect with your audience and interact with them," he says. "I keep it fun for me and the audience."

Navarrete, who doesn't "pretest" his routines even to his wife, regularly flies to Manila to share his brand of humor to the emerging local standup comedy scene. After Honolulu, he'll fly off to Maui, Vancouver, Los Angeles and the East Coast. He is also in the midst of planning a United Kingdom tour.

Navarrete has become a tour-de-force on his own, leaving everyone laughing just because we know what he is talking about—us pinoyos all over the world and our own brand of eccentricities. And yes, we love it. To see where he's off to next, visit his website at www.RexNavarrete.com.

Tickets for the May 28 and 29 gigs, can be purchased online at www.groovetickets.com, Pipeline Cafe Box Office, Hawaii's Natural High, www.pipelinecafehawaii.com, or charge by phone at 1-877-71-GROOV. Tickets are at \$25 and \$45. The show starts at 8 pm. (doors open at 7 pm).

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COMMUNITY PARADE



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Consul Lulu Tabamo was given a farewell reception by her colleagues at the Philippine Consulate General of Honolulu. The reception, which was held at the Consulate, was well-attended by community leaders, friends and members of her family. She has been assigned to work at the Philippine Consulate in the Vatican City.





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Into Law**

Gov. Lingle has signed into law HB2157 which expands the capacity of Type I adult residential care homes from two to three nursing facility level residents.

According to the law, a Type I home consists of five or fewer residents. Previously, the law stated that no more than two could be nursing facility level residents but that is now changed to three. Up to six residents may be allowed at the discretion of the Department of Human Services provided that the primary caregiver or home operator is a certified nurse aide who has completed a state-approved training program and other training as required by the department.

Supporters of the bill say that allowing adult residential care homes that are licensed by Registered Nurses to care for three expanded level of care residents will provide quality and cost effective residential care in a home based setting. It will also help ease the financial burden on the state and save millions by having residents pay for expanded care in the community for a longer period of time, before needing to apply for State-funded services.

"This measure represents the collaborative work of elderly advocates, care home operators, case managers, caregivers, hospitals, healthcare centers and lawmakers," says Rep. John Mizuno who introduced the bill. "Act 120 will certainly help to reduce Hawaii's acute care patient waitlist problem, save Hawaii hospitals millions of dollars annually and provide affordable, quality healthcare to our higher level of care seniors."

There is a critical need for expanded residential care for the elderly. According to the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, there is a waiting list of between 200-275 patients on any given day in the state. The importance of this bill is that it will help to reduce the waitlist. It will also help to provide better care and monitoring for the elderly, especially the prevention of falls. This could potentially save them costs associated with hospitalization, long-term care, emergency room visits and rehabilitation.

"I'm very pleased that the governor has signed this bill into law," Rep. Mizuno

says. "It will make a dramatic improvement in our ability to care for our elderly family members."

Disaster Preparedness

A second bill recently signed into law by the governor authorizes the State Director of Civil Defense to work with the City and County of Honolulu to develop a disaster preparedness plan for the Waianae Coast area.

House Bill 2692 was introduced by Rep. Karen Awana who proposed a model disaster preparedness plan for the Leeward Coast that could be expanded for other areas of the state in the future.

The Leeward Coast has the potential to be severely impacted by natural and man-made disasters due to the following factors:

- One main highway into and out of the area, with no alternate routes. Closure of the roadway leaves residents stranded.
- A large homeless population in the area living on the beaches with limited resources.
- The elderly have limited access to disaster shelters and transportation services.
- The growing population in the area relies heavily on public transportation.

"A disaster preparedness plan for the Leeward Coast is long overdue," says Rep. Maile Shimabukuro. "I hope this empowers Civil Defense to move forward with a plan that will protect the community. We are all deeply concerned for the safety of the residents in the event of a disaster."

The law authorizes but does not require Civil Defense to prepare a plan. If the department goes forward with the plan, the Director of Civil Defense must submit a report to the legislature prior to the start of the 2011 legislative session.

"A disaster preparedness plan is so critical to our community," says Rep. Awana. "If a major disaster closes the road, this places our people in serious jeopardy. We need to have a plan in place so that we are prepared to deal with the inevitable disaster that will strike. It's a matter of health and safety."

TRAVEL

Trivial Pursuit in Malaysia

By Zanjoe Marudo /
Sunday, May 16, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - Many people think sharing some good old trivia about a thing or a place is dead boring. Well, I'm one of them. Museums and Google could always teach me those things. But during our last trip to Malacca and Kuala Lumpur, the tour guide kind of got my attention. He's got some pretty amazing stories and well, trivia, that got me thinking. And smiling, too.

The Tomb is a Womb

On the way to the Cheng

Hoon Teng Temple, one of the oldest Chinese temples in Malacca, we passed by Chinese cemeteries that occupied hills by the road. People say they're intentionally located here so as to be closer to God. But what caught my attention was the cemeteries' tombstone designs which were kind of atypical. All of them were surrounded by circular stone arcs, dotting the hills continuously from one point to the next. According to Mr. Tour Guide, the headstones were designed that way. Why? He said they represent the person returning to the womb from where their life began. That explains the half circles. Clever.

Wet and wild

At the Baba-Nyonya Heritage Museum which was a stunning ancestral home that preserves the legacy of three generations of a Straits-born Chinese Baba family, there's this woman who pretty much got all her spicels ready. Her story-telling and peculiar speaking voice was just unforgettable. I pretty much remember her saying that the Babas were a combination of the Chinese and Malay culture, a result of marriages between early Chinese settlers and local Malay women. On the house's second floor there was this small opening from which you could take a peek at everything happening under. The purpose



Viva Malacca: The colorful streets of Malacca, particularly the Dutch Square invites tourists to explore amazing attractions such as the Stadhuys, the Tan Beng Swee Clock Tower, Queen Victoria Fountain and Christ Church

of that hole? When a woman does not like to marry a certain guy and he comes to visit, she's free to splash water all over him and shoo him away instantly. Now that's wild and wet.

The Twins have two fathers

Hats off, we all know The Petronas Twin Towers are beyond marvelous. But what most of us probably do not know is that the twins were "conceived"

by two different "fathers"! The towers were constructed by contractors from two countries: tower one by a Japanese firm and tower two by a South Korean team. Those who knew from the very beginning say that it was an "interesting build" as the two raced to build the now 12-year-old mega-tall twins. So I guess it's safe to say The Petronas isn't Malaysian but half-Japanese and half-Korean. (www.philstar.com)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Liberal Party Fields Belmonte as House Speaker Bet

By Dennis Carcamo /
Thursday, May 20, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - The Liberal Party has decided to support the House speakership bid of Quezon City Congressman-elect Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte Jr.

In a statement, LP president Sen. Mar Roxas said the move to field Belmonte as its official candidate for the House Speaker was decided after a caucus last night, which was also attended by current presidential frontrunner Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

"Siya (Belmonte) angaming susupportahan, siya ang



Quezon City congressman-elect Sonny Belmonte, Aquino and Rep. Erin Tanada join hands during the Liberal Party's caucus

aming ikakampanya (We will support him, campaign for him," Roxas said, adding that the LP is confident that Belmonte, an outgoing Quezon

City mayor, will successfully capture the House speakership.

Earlier, LP stalwarts said they welcome coalitions and alliances with other parties, including the Nacionalista Party, Nationalist People's Coalition and even the ruling Lakas-Kampik-CMD, to get enough numbers to support Belmonte's bid. (www.philstar.com)

Comelec: Special Polls to be Held on May 28

MANILA, Philippines - The Commission on Elections (Comelec) today said special polls will be held on May 28 in areas where a failure of elections was declared.

The Comelec scheduled the special elections on May 28, an Islamic holy day, in seven towns in Lanao del Sur (Lumba Bayabao, Lumbaca Unayan, Marogong, Masiu, Sultan Dumalondong, Tubaran and Bayang), two villages in Basilan (Upper and Lower Mahaybahay in Maluso), Iloilo (Generosa in Guimbal) and

Western Samar (Brgy. Buenas Aires in Pagsanjan).

A failure of elections was declared in Lanao del Sur and Basilan when the assigned Board of Inspectors did not show up. Meanwhile, the same was declared in Iloilo and Western Samar after ballots there got interchanged.

Comelec spokesman James Jimenez said the special elections will still be automated, adding that its results are crucially needed to facilitate the proclamation of the winners in the party-list race.

(www.philstar.com)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS FEATURE

Filipino Migration to Continue, According to PIDS Study

By Ted P. Torres /
Monday, May 17, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - The aging population and accommodative migration policies of most destination countries, plus the inability of the domestic economy to offer jobs, will mark the continued migration of Filipinos seeking better opportunities abroad.

According to the study conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), aging countries are expected to increase their demand for health professionals and eventually other set of professionals who will fill the gap in their labor force. Migration policies will likewise provide the structure on the flow of both per-

manent and temporary workers.

The authors of the study, PIDS senior research fellow Dr. Aniceto C. Orbeta Jr. and research analyst Michael Ralph Abrigo, said that the increasing number of migrants in the population is expected to deepen (more in the same household) and widen (other households in the same geographic area) the scope of migration because of a high probability that migrants will effectively reduce migration costs.

"The drivers and prospects both in the local economy and in the major destination countries will define also the future of migration streams in the country," they said.

The financial crisis in 2008 did not stop the migration, and eventually remittance numbers for Filipinos although it had a negative impact on other migrating nationalities.

Last year, the number of

overseas Filipinos did not contract but merely decelerated. Remittances that passed through the formal or banking sector actually expanded by over six percent.

Meanwhile, key factors affecting migration of Filipinos are the domestic economy, demography, politics and the environment.

The economy has failed to expand and thus job opportunities are contracting, and it has been notoriously consistent for its inconsistent economic boom.

In terms of demography, there is a high population in the Philippines accompanied by a slow decline in fertility rate in neighboring and in destination countries. Given this dual situation, Filipino migrants can obviously fill the population gaps and lack of human labor in major destination countries.

The study observed that since the 1980s, the political "adventurisms" of the country contributed to the lack of political stability, and led to a push migration to "safer and more stable" developed countries.

Finally, the Philippines not only averages 20 typhoons a year, but the intensity and volume of rain has been reaching disturbing levels. Plus the vulnerability they bring especially to large coastal areas during this time of climate change encourages migration.

The PIDS study said that in



the short-term demand for overseas Filipinos and other foreign workers accelerates in the Middle East and Asian countries as the infrastructure boom continues.

The annual flow of Filipino migrants shows that temporary migrant workers, over permanent, dominate in terms of volume, with around 36,000 workers leaving the country in 1975 up to more than 1.2 million in 2007.

Among the temporary migrant workers, land-based workers have comprised around eight of every 10 workers leaving annually since the 1990s. This includes the increasing number of new-hire and the even faster increasing proportion of rehired workers, which show that employers prefer workers with prior international experience.

Land-based temporary migrants are composed of professionals, service workers, production process workers, transport workers, and laborers. The professionals consist of architects and engineers, health professionals, and composers and performing artists. Service workers, on the other hand, are mainly composed of maids and housekeepers deployed around

the world.

When compared with the domestic labor force, Filipino temporary migrant workers are shown to be younger and better educated. Around seven of every 10 temporary migrant workers are of ages between 24 to 44 years old and half of them have at least some tertiary education. Temporary labor migration is likewise selective of sex, with majority of temporary migrant workers being women.

Meanwhile, Filipino permanent migrants are in the developed countries of North America, particularly the United States (US). Other destinations of permanent migrants are countries in Asia, Oceania, and Europe but the proportion is far lower than that in North America.

The larger proportion of permanent migrants (mostly highly educated) are unemployed—housewives, students, and minors—dependents of professionals who emigrated because of more career advancement opportunities, over and above the differences in wages.

This scenario is created by the family reunification goal of permanent migration in the US—the prime destination of Filipino emigrants. (www.philstar.com)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Shrinking Dollar Prompts OFWs to Spend Less

By Mayen Jaymalin /
Monday, May 17, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are now putting more of their money in savings than in expenditures because of the weakening US dollar, a study conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) showed.

The study showed that 44.8 percent of households supported by OFWs placed more cash in savings in the last quarter of 2009, 10.9 percentage points higher from 33.9 percent the previous quarter.

Less OFWs prioritized the payment of housing amortization in the last quarter of last

year, only 10.5 percent, 1.6 percentage points lower than 12.1 percent the previous quarter.

Less OFW-supported households paid through debit, only 49.2 percent in the last quarter of 2009, 0.8 percentage lower compared to 50 percent the previous quarter.

Purchase of consumer items such as appliances went down .5 percent.

DOLE said OFW remittances have greatly contributed to the overall growth of the Philippine economy.

DOLE said these expenditures patterns are affected by the country's economic condition, as well as the family's financial situation. (www.philstar.com)



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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

As Immigration Protests Mount Democrats Unveil Plan

to challenge the constitutionality of the law.

In the meantime, it has been reported that at least ten (10) states including Ohio, Missouri, Maryland, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas are preparing to introduce similar anti-immigrant legislations.

National outrage over the law has been growing rapidly. On May 1st, hundreds of thousands took to the streets in at least 70 locations all over the country. Some demonstrators were arrested, including Rep. Gutierrez, the principal author of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill in the House.

Rep. Gutierrez likened the anti-Aztlania movement to the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Rev. Jesse Jackson said that "Arizona has become a Selma."

Only several days ago,

President Obama said that Congress "may not have the appetite to tackle immigration reform this year." But he quickly praised the proposal of Democratic Senators Harry Reid, Richard Durbin, Charles Schumer, Patrick Leahy, Diane Feinstein and Robert Menendez to fix our broken immigration system as soon as possible.

The Democratic proposal is entitled Real Enforcement with Practical Answers for Immigration Reform or REPAIR. It is a "framework of concrete bipartisan ideas" for reform.

It would increase the number of border patrol officers, immigration agents and inspectors at the port of entry. It would also provide for a more effective entry-exit system designed to monitor overstaying visitors.

It seeks to end illegal employment through biometric employment verification. Bio-

metric social security cards would be issued within eighteen (18) months from the date of the enactment of the proposed law.

The legal immigration system would be reformed to maximize economic prosperity. The law would provide immediate green cards to foreign students educated in the U.S. with an advanced degree in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. The existing H and L visas would be reformed and a new H-2C visa for non-seasonal, non agricultural workers would be created.

The family immigration backlog would be cleared over an 8-year period. Unused immigrant visas would be recaptured and spouses and children would be classified as immediate relatives. The per country cap would be increased from 7% to 10%. Children of Filipino

World War II veterans would be exempted from the cap. Foreign doctors, nurses, and physical therapists would be given workers visas more easily.

Undocumented immigrants would be legalized in two phases. Phase I would require them to register, be fingerprinted and get a background check. Upon their complete registration, they would be accorded Lawful Prospective Immigrant status (LPI) with right to work and travel. Those who fail to register or those who are not eligible to register would be arrested and deported.

Phase II would start 8 years after the enactment of the law and when the current visa backlogs are cleared. They would be eligible to apply for adjustment to permanent residents.

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

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Some Discrepancies But No Fraud - PPCRV

By Evelyn Macairan / Thursday, May 20, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - The Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) ended its count yesterday, and concluded that although there were discrepancies in the election returns (ERs) that the group tallied, no systematic fraud occurred.

The PPCRV ruled that the just concluded automated elections were "good" since only .07 percent of the 43,035 ERs from clustered precincts showed signs of discrepancy.

PPCRV chair and former ambassador to Rome Henrietta de Villa categorized the automated 2010 polls as "generally clean."

"In the midst of the state of speculations, all the accusations that are now being thrown against the first fully automated election that was carried out nationwide, we, together with the majority of Filipinos, still believe that the AES (Automated Election System) must be here to stay," De Villa said.

"There was no systematic attempt of fraud. If there was an attempt, then they failed to pull it off," she added.

Speaking at the PPCRV-

KBP Command Center at the Pope Pius XII Center in Manila, De Villa boasted that they saw the unfolding of a new type of "people power" where it was demonstrated that "through election automation, we overthrew the system of apathy and electoral fraud."

She also expressed her gratitude to the volunteers and the companies that provided food, communication equipment and cargo forwarding services in support of PPCRV activities.

The PPCRV managed to draw 500,000, or one million volunteers.

Ten days after they started operation, the PPCRV held a press briefing titled "PPCRV-Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) Election 2010 Count - Comparison of the Manually Encoded 4th ER and the Transmitted Data of the Commission on Elections (Comelec)."

The PPCRV-KBP findings showed that as of Tuesday midnight, out of the 70,255 ERs they have received, which account for 92.02 percent of the total 76,475 ERs of clustered precincts, they have so far encoded 43,035 ERs and only 29 precincts, which repre-

sent only .07 percent, showed discrepancies.

The votes from the 29 precincts cover only about 17,000 votes.

Discrepancy does not necessarily mean fraud

The discrepancies spotted in the 29 ERs were divided into four categories.

The first type, wherein the candidates got zero votes, was reported in four precincts.

The second type, where in the transmission of votes a candidate would get a minus of one vote, was reflected in at least two precincts.

A majority or 19 clustered precincts spotted with discrepancy fell under the third category where the transmitted votes of the candidates were all less than 10 compared to the numbers in the ERs.

In four precincts, the PPCRV observed that the candidates got higher votes in the transmission compared to their record in the ER, where they only registered single digit number of votes.

After a thorough study of the 29 precincts, De Villa said there was "no noticeable pattern" and that there was no particular candidate targeted by the discrepancy.

elections.

De Villa said that the matter has been referred to the Comelec.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) president Tandag Bishop Nereo Odchimar said the PPCRV performed its role as an election watchdog successfully and that the full automated elections were even praised by other countries such as members of the European Union. (www.philstar.com)

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MAINLAND NEWS

New US Envoy Says He's Excited to Work with Noynoy

By Jose Katigbak /
Wednesday, May 19, 2010

WASHINGTON — New US ambassador to the Philippines Harry Thomas Jr. said he was excited to work with the incoming administration of president-elect Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III on key issues important to both countries such as defense, security, human rights and business opportunities.

"And if I can get to meet Manny Pacquiao, I'll really impress my family," Thomas said in an interview with Ernie Bower, Southeast Asia Program Director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based, non-partisan think tank.

He said the United States was also interested in working in partnership with the Philippines in ending terrorism, eliminating trafficking in women and children, improving people-to-people relations and strengthening the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In the interview posted on the CSIS website on Monday, Thomas congratulated the Fil-



New United States Ambassador to the Philippines Harry K. Thomas Jr. presented his credentials to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at Malacañang Palace.

ipino people on the success of the recent general elections which he said reaffirmed their commitment to democracy.

In reply to a query, he said increased Chinese influence in the Philippines was an opportunity, not a problem, for the United States.

"We want to work with China on many things, especially in the business realm and we want to make sure China knows the Asia-Pacific region is important to us," he said.

Thomas said China's intentions must be transparent and the ownership issue of disputed territories in the South China Sea must be settled with ASEAN as a group and not just with one or two countries.

He said President Barack Obama was interested in renewable energy and since the Philippines was a leader in the

use of renewable energy "that's an area that I think the president wants to talk to Filipinos about."

Ever since the early 1970s when then President Ferdinand Marcos created a major government program to find, develop and generate electricity from hot rocks deep in the ground, the Philippines has become the world's largest consumer of electricity from geothermal sources.

Thomas said the United States was very pleased the Philippines had taken the lead in pressing Myanmar's military rulers to release opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and restore freedom and democracy to the Burmese people.

Bower sat down with Thomas at CSIS to talk about RP-US relations on May 14. (www.philstar.com)

MYX to Hold Concert in San Francisco Bay Area

By Paolo Romero /
Wednesday, May 19, 2010

MANILA, Philippines -- In celebration of Asian American Pacific Heritage Month, MYX, ABS-CBN's music and entertainment channel, is hosting a major concert in the San Francisco Bay Area featuring the hottest hip-hop and R&B stars.

Slated on May 22 at the historic Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, MYX MASH will feature performances by hip-hop giant T-Pain, K-pop superstar act Brown-Eyed Girls and chart-topping producer-turned-solo artist Bruno Mars.

MYX said the buzz for the much-anticipated concert had already started weeks ago when blogs and social networking sites spread talk about MYX bringing huge music stars into the Bay Area.

The channel was recently launched there by Comcast, the largest cable operator in the US, on Channel 368 as part of the Digital Preferred Tier. The final line-up of performers was revealed last week, much to the excitement of Bay Area music fans.

MYX channel head Miguel Santos vowed to bring its local audiences a unique music experience.

"Since MYX launched in the Bay Area, we want our local audiences to experience the unique brand of entertainment



that we as the only Asian American channel in the US can offer," Santos said.

"MYX MASH, which also honors and celebrates Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, is a guaranteed power-packed showcase of music fusion and talent. This is a unique music event and we look forward to having the whole Bay Area community join us," he added.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit www.myx.tv or www.citybox-office.com or call 415.392.4400.

Headquartered in Redwood City, California, MYX was developed by ABS-CBN International, a US-based subsidiary ABS-CBN Broadcasting. It is the only music entertainment and lifestyle channel dedicated to the Asian American community, utilizing music, culture and entertainment.

MYX can be seen on Channel 368 on Comcast's Digital Preferred Tier in the San Francisco Bay Area, Comcast ON DEMAND, Cox Digital Basic Cable, DIRECTV 2067 and RCN. For more details, visit <http://myx.tv>. (www.philstar.com)

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

BICOL CLUB OF HAWAII INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS, SALUTE TO GRADUATES, HONOR PARENTS OF THE YEAR AND SARONG BANGGI AWARDS NIGHT / SATURDAY

May 22, 2010 • Pagoda Hotel International Ballroom, Honolulu, HI • 6pm • Donation: \$40.00 • Filipino or Aloha Attire • For further information, email jporias808@aol.com

MS. UNITED PANGASINAN OF HAWAII (UPH) 2010 CORONATION, DINNER, AND DANCE / SATURDAY

May 22, 2010 • Pacific Beach Hotel (Grand Ballroom), Waikiki Beach, Honolulu, HI • 5:30pm-MN • For further information, call Cely Villareal @ (808) 689-4911 or (808) 778-2481

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LITTLE MISS PHILIPPINES HAWAII BY PHIL. CULTURAL FOUNDATION OF HAWAII / SATURDAY

May 29, 2010 • Empress Restaurant • 6:30pm-MN • Call Janice Sevilla at 595-8000, Maggie Domingo at 783-0068

MISS OAHU FILIPINA SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT / FRIDAY

June 4, 2010 • Hawaii Prince Hotel Maunakea Ballroom • 7 pm • Please call Danny Villanar at 778-0233, Mano Palma at 397-8626

UNITED FILIPINO COUNCIL OF HAWAII'S 21ST ANNUAL MRS. HAWAII FILIPINA SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT / SUNDAY

June 20, 2010 • Hawaii Prince Hotel Maunakea Ballroom • To enter please call Eddie Agas, Sr. at 783-2237, Carlota Ader at 450-9821; Cleo Bala-Casino at 218-9072

UFCH GOLF TOURNAMENT / THURS- DAY

June 24, 2010 • Kapolei Golf Course • 7 pm • Please Call Eddie Agas at 783-3327

GLOBAL NEWS

RP, EU to Sign Partnership Deal in June

MANILA, Philippines - The Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the Philippines and the European Union is expected to be signed in June paving the way for a better trade relation between the country and the EU.

In a text message, Trade Secretary Jesli A. Lapus said the stalemate between the Philippines and EU was resolved Monday night.

"EU agreed to accept the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) proposal. We therefore expect the next seventh round in June to be the final one," Lapus said.

Lapus refused to elaborate on the intellectual property issues saying only "we might have to amend the law and we cannot commit that right now."

He said the PCA is a precursor to the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). He said the FTA with EU will be completed within the year.

With the PCA in place, Lapus said there will be growth in the trade. "The potential for growth is very big. You can talk double digit because our



Trade Secretary Jesli A. Lapus

capacity is very big."

However, Lapus said the EU is still insisting on relaxing our foreign ownership restrictions. Under the constitution, foreigners are not allowed full ownership of land in the Philippines.

"We are looking at ways to relax but only in the energy sector," Lapus said. He noted that the German technology is foremost in renewable energy and they are hesitant in investing big amount in the Philippines because of the 60-40 rule.

Meanwhile, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines

(ECCP) is doubling its efforts at bringing European expertise and technology into the country through a revamp of its European IT Service Center (EITSC).

The EITSC, an initiative established by the ECCP in 2002, will now be known as the European Innovation, Technology, and Science Center and will expand its work beyond assisting enterprises in the information technology (IT) and business process outsourcing (BPO) industries.

Under its new mandate, the EITSC is now tasked to provide trainings and consultancies on energy efficiency, sustainable environment, global health, materials solutions, and food security to local companies.

The EITSC will be bringing into the country leading European companies and experts to provide training and consultancies to officials and staffs of local companies. At the same time, it will create a pool of local experts, who are authorities in their industries, to assist them in the delivery of their services.

(www.philstar.com)

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