

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ JUNE 20, 2009 ◆

SUMMER TRAVEL TO THE PHILIPPINES – CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD

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"SKY WALK"
Crown Regency Hotel and Towers
Cebu, Philippines

Photo Courtesy by Crown Regency Hotel and Towers



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EDITORIAL

A World of Adventure Awaits Travelers to the Philippines

Summer is perhaps the preferred time of the year to travel to the Philippines, despite the heat and higher than normal airfare. Most balikbayans return home to visit relatives and friends, luggage with them box after box of pasalubongs—while others, like foreigners and first time Fil-Ams, usually prefer sightseeing and playing tourist.

First-timers, if they can get past the initial shock from the poverty, pollution and traffic, will discover a very hospitable people and encounter many unique and unforgettable experiences all throughout the archipelagic nation. They will find that despite modern day advances in technology, the Philippines has managed to retain its old world culture and charm. It is still a place where children bow and touch the hand of elders to their foreheads to show respect and where age is a badge of honor, not of disgrace. As one foreigner described it, visiting the Philippines is not a thrill like a roller coaster ride or a bungee jump but an insightful life changing experience, a rebirth, a reincarnation, a new way of looking at the world and others with more compassion, understanding and empathy.

For others seeking leisure, outdoor activities and a world of adventure, the Philippines is just what the doctor ordered. A wide range of entertainment, from an exciting night life, to golf, world class shopping malls, fine restaurants, pristine beaches and stunning resorts are available. To top it off, Filipinos are friendly, speak English and will make you feel right at home.

The beauty of traveling to the Philippines is that no matter what your travel itinerary or reason for visiting, the Philippines has it for you and at very affordable prices. With the exchange rate at P48.46 as of mid-June 2009, your dollar will surely go a long way. So what are you waiting for? Come visit the Philippines and enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

Furloughs Bad News For Hawaii Families

The governor's announcement of the details in her plans to furlough state workers is unwelcome news for those living from paycheck-to-paycheck in this difficult economy. Under her plan, most state departments will close three Fridays a month beginning in July.

Faced with a \$688 million budget shortfall despite having already cut the State budget to the bone, Gov. Lingle opted for three-day furloughs that would cut about 13.8 percent from a state worker's salary. Several public worker unions have filed lawsuits to block the furloughs, but it's a lose-lose situation. Even if they win in court, the governor will proceed with massive layoffs of up to 10,000 state employees.

In looking for the silver lining in this dark time, it should be comforting to public workers that they still have full-time jobs and health insurance coverage for themselves and their families—unlike their counterparts in the private sector who were laid off with basically little warning. Historically, there has always been peaks and valleys in the economy. Although we are perhaps in the lowest of val-

FROM THE PUBLISHER

A

loha and welcome to the latest issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle! For many Filipinos in Hawaii, summer is the time to take a family vacation—whether it is to the mainland, on a cruise or



back home to the Philippines. Unfortunately, most families are postponing their vacations due to the bad economy. Some are instead taking advantage of kamaaina rates and staying at local hotels for several days. A bit of advice if you fall into this category—with July 4th falling this year on a Saturday, consider booking a room in Waikiki (the Hawaii Prince or the Hilton) and watching the Fourth of July fireworks show at Magic Island from your hotel room balcony. It is truly a spectacular sight!

Our cover story for this issue is written by Gregory Bren Garcia who takes an in-depth look at summer travel to the Philippines. He takes you through a region by region tour of the Philippines and lists several "must do" activities and "must see" attractions. For you thrill seekers, there is a new 38-story hotel in Cebu City called the Crown Regency Hotel that boasts the world's first edge coaster—a thrill ride that goes around the edge of the building. If that's too much, you can enjoy a spectacular view of the city via a harness-supported stroll around the edge of the building through the hotel's Sky Walk attraction. Sound good to you? If so, please read more on pages 4-5. Gregory also provides our readers with good travel tips on page 9.

Also in this issue, Councilmember Cachola has written an Open Forum article on funding for the City's multi-billion dollar rail transit project. Cachola, who's in his early 70s and considered perhaps the elder statesman among Filipino politicians, has urged that the administration take a closer look at funding for the project—particularly since general excise tax (GET) collections have been lower than expected due to the slumping economy. His advice? Tread carefully or else future generations of taxpayers will be unduly overburdened in paying for this project. Please read more on page 3 and see whether or not you agree with his statements.

Despite the bad economy, the City did receive a bit of good news in the form of a \$1 million grant to the Department of Community Services' YouthBuild Honolulu program. The program provides non-high school graduates ages 16-24 with alternative education and job training services. Services include a high school diploma program, vocational and hands on construction training, leadership development, and job readiness and placement services. If you are or know of a youth who would benefit from this grant, please call 832-7960 to find out more or to determine eligibility. Read more information on this grant is available on page 7.

In closing, we hope that you will enjoy reading these and other articles and columns of interest in this issue, particularly "Legislative Connection" on page 6 and "Legal Notes" on page 13.

Until next time...aloha and *mabuhay!*

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

leys, there will be a rebound, so it is best to sit tight and ride it out.

In the meantime, continue to take control and responsibility for your finances. Pay down your debt! Most importantly, pay attention to your emotional health. Be willing to seek counseling during these hard times and be a listening ear as well. As humans, we are a resilient lot and we will bounce back.

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OPEN FORUM

Funding For Rail Transit



By Romy M. Cachola
Councilmember, Dist. VI

Recent news reports about the dire state of our economy have prompted me to raise my concerns over funding for the rail project.

Just a few years ago, the City and its consultants said that the 20-mile Minimum Operable Segment (MOS) would cost \$3.7 billion, which includes FTA funds. They also said for the record that \$3.7 billion will be enough to build the MOS. However, in today's dollars, we now need \$5.4 billion, rather than \$3.7 billion, to complete the project.

I believe that funding for the transit project will be short by about \$2.02 billion. Consider the following:

- \$ 1.7 billion (the difference between \$5.4 billion and \$3.7 billion)
- + 220 million (added cost to amend MOS from Salt Lake Boulevard to airport)
- + 100 million (added cost for right-of-way acquisition as reported by the media)
- = \$2.02 billion total estimated shortage

The City may find itself deeper in the red due to the following developments:

1. The half percent GET collection continues to be lower than what was projected. From January 2007 to April 2009 (the first 28 months), GET collections were short by about \$70-75 million. GET collections will continue to lag for the next two years, based on future projections by the State Council on Revenues and other economists.
2. The 79 positions in the City's rail transit division will be funded using the half percent GET increase. This translates to approximately \$83 million over

the remaining 13 year GET collection period (2010-2022), not counting future salary increases and benefits. The \$83 million will further reduce the amount of GET revenues collected.

3. The administration's proposal to float \$917 million in General Obligation (GO) bonds. It is being made under the premise that it is only short-term borrowing for cash flow purposes and that the debt service will be paid for by the half percent increase in the GET. This bond float translates to an added cost of about \$37 million to \$55 million per year in interest only, depending on an interest rate of 4 to 6 percent.
4. Costs for O&M. When the first segment from East Kapolei to Waipahu is completed, the expected shortfall in ridership revenues will be a further draw on the half percent GET collection. Any O&M costs paid using GET funds will further reduce the half percent tax collection.

In view of the aforementioned statements and for the success of the rail project, I suggest the City administration to do the following:

- Refine and submit a revised financial plan for the rail transit system to the Council and especially the public, for the sake of transparency and accountability. We owe it to our taxpayers to be honest and to tell them upfront that transit funding will fall short and that revenue assumptions and projections have changed. All of these should be done soon in order to still gain the confidence and support of the taxpaying public for the rail project.
- Delete for now funding in the City's current operating budget for the proposed 79 positions in the rail transit division. Funding these positions will be

a further draw on GET collections. There are professional consultants on board who are already doing the work that the new positions are calling for—positions such as informational officers, secretaries, engineers, planners and others. Furthermore, the public is expecting the administration and the Council to fiscally-tighten the City's belt during these tough economic times.

- Delete for now the authorization of the \$917 million in GO bonds. There should be no need to float bonds now. With \$349.3 million in GET revenues for the first 28 months, with four more collection years to go and with FTA New Starts funds, we are well on our way to collecting the amount needed for construction and operation of the first segment which is scheduled for completion in 2013. Delaying this bond float WILL NOT affect construction jobs, since construction of the first segment will proceed and still boost the economy.

- Consider applying for a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA). Most, if not all, municipalities and/or cities with big transit projects such as Honolulu, have applied for an FFGA prior to construction. Currently, there are at least 20 municipalities and/or cities ahead of us that have applied for an FFGA. Also, the \$1.4 billion that has been reported as the FTA's share for our project is just an estimate until we have applied for and secured an FFGA.

The benefits of an FFGA are that it defines the project scope; establishes a firm date for project completion; provides a mechanism for designating funds for future years; leads to the development of accurate cost estimates; permits the use of state and local funding for early project activities without jeopardizing future federal funding for those activities; and determines the amount of funding we will receive from the FTA for this project.

An FFGA will also result in better predictability and transparency and prevent cost

overruns and delays.

I hope my concerns and suggestions will merit the administration's and the Council's understanding and concurrence. Taxpayers are already coping with the loss of their homes and jobs. Many more face worker furloughs, increased taxes, reduced benefits and are understandably apprehensive about the future given the dire state of our economy.

Speaking of the economy, the City's and State's budget shortfalls total hundreds of millions of dollars—which is small compared to the billion dollar deficit taxpayers may inherit for the rail transit project. I hate to imagine what it would be like for taxpayers when the GET collection ends in 2022 and there is still a substantial debt service left to pay.

For the record, I am a firm believer in an efficient mass transit system—but not at the expense of overburdening our city and taxpayers.

In closing, I'm also raising these concerns now so that future mayors and councilmembers, as well as current and future generations of taxpayers, will not look back and blame this Council or the current administration for the financial predicament we will find ourselves in.

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Summer Travel to the Philippines—Crossroads of the World

By Gregory Bren Garcia

Warm weather has set in, school is out, and office workers are scrambling to file for vacation leave. Yes, it is summertime once again.

For many from the U.S. mainland, vacation leads them to such places as the Caribbean, their home states, and of course, mostly everyone's dream holiday destination—Hawaii. But for the many Fil-Ams who call Hawaii home, a summer vacation usually means going back to the Philippines, the land of their birth.

There has never been a more exciting time to travel to the Philippines. Classified by the International Monetary Fund as a newly industrialized country, it has experienced rapid growth in tourism-related infrastructures since 2005. In 2008, the Department of Tourism (DOT) announced that tourist arrivals in the Philippines reached a record high of 3.14 million people despite the global financial crisis. Much of this can be attributed to the country's successful WOW! Philippines campaign, which shifted the nation's focus to promoting itself as a destination of diversity instead of just being a tropical destination.

Manila, the Philippines' World City

Manila is the Philippines' cultural and financial capital and the gateway to its many exciting destinations. The city will always be known for its heritage locations like the old Spanish fortress, Intramuros, and the all-steel Basilica of San Sebastian, which was designed by none other than the celebrated French engineer Gustave Eiffel himself.

But what the city is most known for are its enormous malls which are some of the world's biggest. One of these is the SM Mall of Asia located by the Manila Bay. While it was recently topped by its sister mall, SM North EDSA as the world's second biggest mall in terms of gross leasable space, its multi-farious attractions beats the latter by a long shot.

The sprawling complex includes features like one of the world's largest IMAX theatres, the Philippines' first Olympic-sized ice skating rink, the SM Science Discovery Center, the country's largest privately-run exhibition venue known as the SMX Convention Center and the dining strip San Miguel by the Bay.

Other must see attractions in the metropolis include the Manila Ocean Park, located by Manila Bay, which is one of Asia's largest aquarium facilities, and Bonifacio High Street, the open-air commercial center of the Bonifacio Global City (BGC) in Taguig City. BGC, a rising financial district, is the face of first-

world Philippines and is the newest address of hip and fashionable Manila.

Northward Bound

Travelers who venture northward often stop to visit famous tourist destinations like the Spanish-era heritage villages of Vigan, Ilocos Sur or the mountain city of Baguio. However, the often bypassed province of Ilocos Norte, has so much more to offer.

For one, it is home to Pagudpud, the province's northernmost town, which undoubtedly has the best white sand beaches in Luzon. The media only recently discovered this hidden paradise.

Travelers who want to sidestep the commercialized beach resorts will be charmed by the rustic beauty of Pagudpud. Expect only a handful of cottages as well as forest-covered foothills framing the immaculate white sand shorelines.

On your way to the beaches, try to fit into



The Cape Bojeador Lighthouse built in 1892 in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, still stands guard today over the South China Sea. (Photo by Gregory Bren Garcia)

your itinerary visits to the town of Bangui to see its gigantic wind power turbines and to the historic Cape Bojeador Lighthouse in Burgos, which overlooks the South China Sea. Built in 1892, the Spanish-era lighthouse is still functional today and has become a very popular tourist destination.

A Volcanic Wonder

Central Luzon is best known for the Subic Bay Freeport Zone in the province of Zambales, a tax and duty free area that has become the

Philippines' gleaming symbol of economic independence, especially since the zone was once a U.S. military base. Its more famous points of interest are its ecotourism parks like the Zoobic Safari and the Ocean Adventure, the Philippines' only open sea marine park.

Two hours away from this economic hub is the Mount Pinatubo Spa Town, located in Sta. Juliana, Capas in Tarlac province. Just almost two decades ago, the area became a wasteland after the volcano's violent eruption. Nowadays, the presence of volcano ash has become a boon to the locals.

Situated amid a perfect



The SM Mall of Asia is the Philippines' second biggest mall, and the world's third largest. (Photo by Gregory Bren Garcia)

COVER STORY



The Pinatubo Spa Town in Sta. Juliana, Tarlac offers therapeutic volcanic ash body treatment. (Photo by Department of Tourism)

backdrop of rolling hills and mountainsides, the spa offers ultimate pampering through its signature volcanic ash spa treatment. The therapy involves covering the body up to the neck with salt and sulfur volcanic ash, which are said to help detoxify the body. This is followed by a massage that combines Filipino, Thai and Shiatsu massage techniques.

The Pinatubo Spa Town is also a popular base camp for adventures hiking Mount Pinatubo.

plex boasts world-class facilities for such sports as cable skiing, wakeboarding, kneeboarding and wakeskating. On top of these, the complex is also home to an ecovillage, a bike park, a pool area, venues for other sports such as volleyball and billiards and dining halls with live entertainment to boot.

For accommodations, guests can choose anything from cabanas and containers to luxury villas and mansion lodgings, all at reasonable prices.

Southern Charms

The Visayas is a group of islands south of Manila. Cebu, its biggest city known as the Queen City of the South, offers a fantastic base camp for nature and culture enthusiasts in the Visayan region. A new hotel in the city's uptown area, the Crown Regency Hotel and Towers, offers not just the usual business and leisure comforts. At 38 floors, it is the tallest hotel outside of Metro Manila. It boasts of the world's first edge coaster, a thrill ride which goes around the edge of the building, as well as the country's first aqua aerobics and water spray massage center. Guests can also opt to play virtual golf or enjoy an exhilarating harness-supported stroll around the edge of the building

through the hotel's Sky Walk attraction.

While in the Visayas, you might want to check other destinations like Bohol province's Loboc River Cruise. Guests are treated to a relaxing trip down the river flanked by lush tropical greenery. While savoring sumptuous native Visayan cuisine, visitors will also be serenaded by singers and guitar ensembles donning colorful shirts and wicker hats.

Another must-see Visayan province is Negros Occidental, home to a number of grand ancestral homes of the early Filipino elite. Be sure to visit the ruins of the early-1900s mansion of sugar baron Don Mariano Ledesma Lacson, set amid a sugar plantation in the city of Bacolod. Built in Italianate and Romanesque architecture, it was the biggest and most grandiose residential building built in the country at that time.

The steam locomotives that carry sugar products in the cities of San Carlos and La Carlota are the other fabled symbols of the province's plantation heritage, so make sure to get a snapshot of them as well.

FURTHER south in Mindanao, Surigao del Norte's Siargao island is the place to go. The Philippines' surfing capital is a superb venue for international surfing competitions because its waves have been ranked among the top five breaks in the world. It features the "Cloud 9" wave, considered as one of



At 38 floors, the Crown Regency Hotel and Towers in Cebu City is the tallest building outside Metropolitan Manila. (Photos by Crown Regency Hotel and Towers)

the world's top surfing waves. The province also offers venues for cave exploration, sea kayaking and diving.

The Philippines is a country of diversity and boundless beauty, a "wealth of wonders" as its famous tourism advertisement says. There is no other

place in the world where east and west, modern and ancient and local and global coexist in such tantalizing harmony. Where in the Philippines will you go to next and which destination will you love the most? Only your imagination is the limit.

The New Jewel of Bicolandia

In the past, the Bicol region in the southern end of Luzon would often bring to mind images of Mayon Volcano's almost perfect conical shape. These days however, it is best known for the Camsur Watersports Complex, located in the province of Camarines Sur.

So popular is it among local and foreign water sports enthusiasts alike that "Camsur," the province's hip portmanteau is now known the world over. It often hosts prominent local and international water sports events, the most recent of which was the 2009 Wake Park World Championships.

Nestled in the Provincial Capitol Complex in the town of Pili, Camsur Watersports Com-



The Camsur Watersports Complex in Camarines Sur province offers world-class cable facilities that draws in water sports enthusiasts from all over the world. (Photos by Camsur Watersports Complex)

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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

Military Affairs Council in Washington DC

security. As chairman of the Senate Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee, this trip provided me valuable knowledge and connections which will help me in my task as a state senator. I was very impressed with the line-up of government officials we met with who included but was not limited to outgoing Secretary of the Army Peter Geren, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs Wallace "Chip" Gregson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Addison "Tad" Davis, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installation and Environment Wayne Army, Under Secretary of the Navy Robert O. Work, and Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley.

One of the top priorities of our visit was to lobby on behalf of the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. The shipyard is not only important in terms of repairs, maintenance, and military readi-

ness, but it also is a major employer providing hundreds of jobs for our local residents. Investing dollars in our shipyard is necessary in our order to keep the yard modern and efficient since shipyards in other locations compete for the work. It's obvious that a shipyard at Pearl Harbor would cater to the ships stationed here, however, there is potential to work on non-military vessels as well, and this is an area where we can improve and do better. Our group met with Vice-Admiral Michael Vitale and Vice-Admiral Kevin McCoy who are in key positions in DC which oversee and affect the Pearl Harbor Shipyard.

Our meeting with David Brice, executive director of the Joint Guam Program Office, included an update of the Okinawa to Guam move which our US Marines will be implementing in the future. Over \$10 billion is currently expected to be spent for the move with funding coming from the Japanese government as well as the US. Infrastructure must be built and improved on Guam to accommodate the thousands of marines and their families who will be relocating there, and opportunities for Hawaii companies and workers will be available as this massive endeavor moves forward. With the economy being in the slump which it is in, the Guam initiative will certainly benefit our state.

A meeting with Senator Dan Akaka who chairs the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee and a separate meeting with General Eric Shinseki, Secretary of Veteran Affairs, gave me an opportunity to lobby for a new Veteran's Health center or clinic at Kalaheo, the former Barbers Pointe Naval Air Station. A new



Senator Will Espero, chairman of the Senate Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee, joined the Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council in Washington DC to meet with key government and military officials in our nation's capitol. Above the Council meets with Representatives Neil Abercrombie and Mazie Hirono.

site is being considered on the Leeward Coast where many veterans live, and the old Barbers Point Health Clinic is available for use. Budgetary constraints may drive this decision.

A visit to the Homeland Security Department with Deputy Secretary Jane Lute focused on the complexities of the newest department in our federal government. An organizational chart shared by the department showed the multiplicity of the agencies and divisions which fall under its jurisdiction. Major areas included the Coast Guard, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement, Transportation Security Administration, US Secret Service, Border Protection, and US Citizenship & Immigration Services. My desire to look at our harbor security and determine why large amounts of illegal aerial fireworks are being smuggled into Hawaii will be helped by this agency. I expect to conduct hearings into these matters this summer.

The need to conserve energy and develop alternatives to oil consumption led to a statement

of federal government lands in Hawaii being considered for alternative energy projects which would be funded by the private sector. Public-private partnerships would be established with the federal government providing the land and private businesses financing the operations. Our military bases would then purchase the alternative energy for their grid, thus relying less on fossil fueled energy. More on this project is forthcoming. Kaneohe Marine Corp Air Station has been a leader in greening its operations, and all military bases have been tasked to utilize alternative energy where feasible.

Makua Valley and the training needs of our Army, support for our military families, National Guard needs, aviation needs, North Korea and many other issues were discussed on this very productive visit which was both educational and fascinating for me. I believe our military is in great hands, and the leadership in Washington DC with whom our group met with are intelligent, outstanding men and women more than capable and willing to protect our state and our nation.

was in Washington D.C. from June 7th - 13th with the Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council as members made their annual visit to our nation's capitol. This was the 24th year the Chamber has lobbied Washington on behalf of Hawaii's military presence and spending. With the military being the number two industry in our state behind tourism, it is imperative that we maintain strong ties and relationships with those in DC who are in charge of operations and expenditures. The visit was my first with the Chamber, and it was very informative as we met with top military commanders, federal civil servants, business leaders, and political appointees involved our nation's safety and

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Fil Chamber of Commerce to Mark 55th Year

The Filipino Chamber of Commerce will hold its 55th Anniversary and Installation Banquet on July 11, 2009 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village.

Rosemarie Mendoza will be installed as president of the Chamber and the Filipino Chamber Foundation. She is a radio personality with KNDI radio.

Other officers to be installed include Jamesner Dumlao, president-elect; Jason Pasqua, immediate past president; Cora Bacig-Credo, vice president; Edna Alikpala, secretary; Lynne Gutierrez, assistant secretary; Luz Pierson, treasurer; Nilda Quindara, assistant treasurer;

Davelyn Quijano, auditor.

The directors are Eddie Agas, Sr., Harry Alonso, Marlene Baldueza, Alma Caberto, Stephen Callo, Charles DeGala, Tess DeJesus, Maria Etrata, Bennette Evangelista, Bernadette Fajardo, Vanessa Kop and Yonic Malig-on.

The Filipino Chamber of Commerce has approximately 400 members statewide. The Chamber sponsors a variety of programs and activities through-

out the year to help promote Hawaii's business community,

such as the Filipino Entrepreneur and Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards, scholarships for deserving high school seniors, scholarship golf tournament and the Taste of Kalihi. Its mission is to broad opportunities for Filipino entrepreneurs and member businesses, strengthen business ties

between Hawaii and the Philippines, assist in the professional growth of its members and support the overall well-being of the community.

To RSVP, please contact event chairperson Bennette Evangelista at 398-5988.



Rosemarie Mendoza

City Youth Program Receives Federal Grant

The Department of Community Services' YouthBuild Honolulu program has been selected for a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

"We're very pleased to be able to continue to provide services for Oahu's disadvantaged youth through our YouthBuild Honolulu program," Mayor Mufi Hannemann says. "It is especially satisfying that the U.S. Department of Labor, through this grant award, has acknowledged and affirmed our commitment towards helping our young people prepare for the workforce and achieve their goals."

Thanks to this grant, the YouthBuild Honolulu program will be able to serve 70 additional non-high school graduates, ages 16-24 over a two-year period. Program training activities include a high school diploma course, hands-on and vocational construction training, community service projects, job readiness training; and job and post-secondary education placement.

Further information on the City's YouthBuild Honolulu program and specific eligibility requirements are available through the City's Youth Services Center at 832-7960.

Ilocanos Welcome Visiting Dignitaries with Community Picnic

For hundreds of Filipinos, Father's Day 2009 was spent at a community picnic that welcomed a group of visiting dignitaries from the Philippines.

The event—sponsored by the Simata Medical Mission, the Hawaii Medical Center and various other Ilocos Norte organizations—welcomed Gov. Michael Marcos Keon of the province of Ilocos Norte, as well as mayors, vice mayors and other officials from various towns in the province. Gov. Marcos' mother, Elisabeth Marcos Keon, was the sister of the late president Ferdinand Marcos.

The Philippine delegation is scheduled to meet with members of the State House of Representatives who authored a resolution to establish a sisterhood relationship between Hawaii and Ilocos Norte. The delegation will also meet with Gov. Linda Lingle, Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann and officials from the

Hawaii Tourism Authority, Hawaii Convention Center and the Maui Disaster and Rescue Center.

The community picnic was held at Blaisdell Park in Pearl City from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. To satisfy everyone's appetites, the "Taste of Ilocos Norte" offered free food and delicacies from the region.

For the health-conscious, the picnic also included a health fair, which provided free medical services and assessments for diabetes, mammograms, hypercholesterolemia, bone marrow and others. The services were provided by the Hawaii Medical Center and a group of Filipino doctors and nurses.

Overall, the picnic was a chance for Hawaii residents from Ilocos Norte to meet with government officials from their home region.

"It was a time to enjoy their company as well as friends and relatives whom we hardly see due



Gov. Mike Marcos Keon

to our busy schedules," says Bay-bee Hufana-Ablan, Simata Medical Mission auditor.

"It was good to socialize with our kababayans and to learn more about what's happening back home. We were all reminded that hospitality is still practiced by Filipinos here in America. The bayanihan spirit is still alive and well among us."

Other Filipino groups who assisted in the event included Vintar Ohana, Sarrat Association of Hawaii, members of Bangué and Burgos, Marcos Town, people from Laoag and others.



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TRAVEL TIPS

Philippine Travel Tidbits

By Gregory Bren Garcia

Planning to go to the Philippines? It pays to take along a few travel tips which you might find useful during your wanderings. A wonderful trip can easily turn unpleasant without proper knowledge of the places you will be visiting or with poor planning.

It will also do you a lot of good if you know how things are typically done in the Philippines. As the old adage goes, "when in Rome, do as the Romans do." When you do as Filipinos do while staying in the Philippines, you're sure to be rewarded in more ways than one.

Climate

The Philippines has a year-round tropical climate with three recognized seasons—the hot or summer season from March to May, the rainy season from June to November, and the dry winter or cool season from December to February.

When to go to the Philippines

The country is within the Pacific typhoon belt, so most of the archipelago experiences torrential rains and storms between July and October. It makes sense to avoid these months, especially if you're vacationing in Luzon or in the Visayas. When visiting during the Christmas season or the Roman Catholic Holy Week, be aware that most of the people, especially in the big cities,



The world's first Edge Coaster thrill ride of Crown Regency Hotel and Towers in Cebu City (Photos by Crown Regency Hotel and Towers)

are on a holiday exodus to the provinces so plan your transportation logistics properly.

Do research on particular dates for Philippine festivals if you are travelling to the country to see them. Fiestas are held year-round, but particularly colorful ones are held in January, May and during the Christmas season in December.

If you plan to go to the beaches, the warmest days are from March to May. Expect a scorcher during these months so bring along some sunscreen and a pair of cool shades. Hot weather in the Philippines is nothing like hot weather in the U.S.

What to wear

A famous Manila blogger once said that Philippine climate is "t-shirt climate." While it makes sense that you bring along light clothing for the country's tropical temperatures, be prepared to deal with weather changes that will require a whole range of other clothing.

Bring along heavier, cool

weather clothing like tracksuit jackets, sweaters or knitted pullovers especially if you plan to go to places at high elevations. Don't forget to pack swimwear and beach flip-flops, because you are more likely to go swimming than not.

Last but not least, don't forget to bring some formal wear in case you end up attending a formal occasion. Remember that a holiday is not an excuse to dress like a slob, and especially in fashion-conscious Manila, dressier attires wouldn't hurt.

Time

Philippine time is Greenwich Mean Time plus eight hours. Don't be surprised if the sun sets earlier in the Philippines than for the mainland U.S. or Hawaii since it is located nearer the equator.

Language

Filipino is the national language while English is spoken widely in commerce and in the academe. Expect people to shift between the two languages, as this construction, known as "Taglish" (a portmanteau of "Tagalog," the language from which Filipino is largely based and "English"), is the vernacular language. Filipinos speak more than 100 other local languages.

Business and banking hours

Private and government offices are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Many private offices in Manila are open beyond 6 p.m. Most commercial establishments like malls and supermarkets accept customers from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily, while night-life establishments remain open until just be-

fore dawn. Banks are open between 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays to Fridays while automated teller machines are open 24 hours.

Electricity

The commercial and residential standard for electricity in the Philippines is 220 volts A.C., 60 cycles. Many hotels also provide 110-volt outlets similar to those used in the U.S.

Local transportation

Riding jeepneys, the ubiquitous colorful public transport vehicles derived from World War II military jeeps, are an inexpensive way to reach your destination, as are buses and tricycles (a motorcycle with a sidecar).

In Metro Manila, the fastest

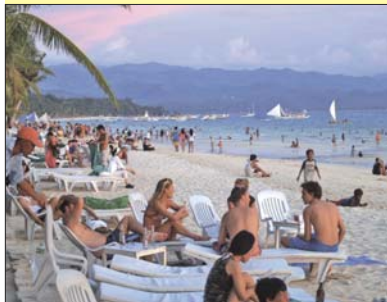
ways to travel are via the mass railway systems, the LRT and the MRT. Metered cabs are also available in major cities, but it is the norm to add a little more to your taxi bill as a token of appreciation to your cab driver.

A tip on tipping

Many restaurants automatically add a 10 percent service charge to their customers' bills. When this is the case, leaving a tip is optional. Otherwise, the standard practice is to leave a tip which is 10 percent of the total bill.



Around Manila, take your pick: MRT or a jeepney (top right)



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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Top-paid Athletes: Pacman Ranks 6th

By Abac Cordero/
Friday, June 19, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao made it to Forbes magazine's list of highest-paid athletes in the world, tying for the sixth spot with basketball phenom LeBron James and golfer Phil Mickelson.

According to Forbes, Pacquiao is the highest-ranking among four of the list's new entrants, raking in a total of \$40 million in the past 12 months. The boxing star is among the eight non-Americans on the list, which had golf icon Tiger Woods (\$110 million) at the top.

"Pac-Man hogged the boxing spotlight over the past year with victories in two blockbuster fights against Oscar De La Hoya in December and Ricky Hatton in May that combined for more than \$100 million in pay-per-view revenue in the US," Forbes said in a brief write-up.

"The two blockbuster fights garnered more than 2 million pay-per-view buys in the US and earned Pac-Man \$30 million combined."

The leading business magazine cited the General Santos City-based southpaw's endorsements with giant firms.

"Pacquiao's massive popularity in his native Philippines is why companies like Nike and San Miguel beer have signed him to endorse their products. Pacquiao intends to use that popularity to run for political office when his ring career is over," Forbes added.

Among those ranking above Pacquiao include basketball stars Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant, and Formula One star Kimi Raikkonen at No. 2 (\$45 million each), and football standout David Beckham at No. 5 (\$42 million).

Forbes has earlier listed Pacquiao as the 57th most influential celebrity in the world. The Filipino ring hero was also included in Time magazine's list of 100 Most Influential People.

Meanwhile, as negotiations for a fight with Miguel Cotto begins, Pacquiao continues to take it easy, letting his Canadian adviser, Mike Koncz, to go to Las Vegas today to meet with Bob Arum regarding the fight proposal.

"I talked with the Cotto people face-to-face at a meeting in Tampa when he was training for the (Joshua)

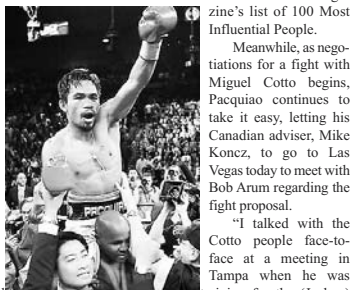
Clotey fight. Now I feel confident I can get the rest of the business done on the telephone," Arum told USA Today.

"There's a ton of money involved. If you push it under arbitrary deadlines it can take a few weeks, which is no hurry, enables me to have enough time to pull it together so nobody feels I'm steamrolling them. There's an art in doing this," added Arum.

"The most pressing issue.... that's the money and who gets what. That's always the biggest issue. I've dealt with both of these camps over the years so many times that I feel that we'll come together and all be satisfied. Based on my conversations with both camps today I am extremely optimistic."

Pacquiao spent two nights in New York last week to receive his Fighter of the Year award and watch the Cotto fight against Josh Clotey, then spent a couple of days in Bohol to join his kids who are on vacation.

Pacquiao and his wife Jinkee flew to Gen. Santos City yesterday. This weekend, the boxer will be in Manila and on Sunday in Ilocos Sur for the birthday celebration of his close friend Chavit Singson. He will fly back to Bohol next week and plans to go scuba diving. (www.philstar.com)



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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Con-Ass May Be Convened Next Month, Bayan Warns

By Katherine Adraneda/
Thursday, June 18, 2009

MANILA, Philippines – With no word yet from the Supreme Court on the legality of a Senate-less constituent assembly, House allies of President Arroyo may try their luck in July to convene a con-ass in time for her last State of the Nation Address, the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan warned yesterday.

"The danger now is that the Arroyo allies in the Lower House may be preparing to convene the con-ass in July so that a justiciable controversy may arise. If they do this, it will surely fuel massive protest actions in time for Arroyo's State of the Nation Address," said Renato Reyes Jr., Bayan secretary-general.

Bayan raised the warning a day after the SC junked for being "premature" the petitions of controversial lawyer Oliver Lozano and Louis Biraogo for the voiding of House Resolution 1109 on the convening of a con-ass.

Reyes stressed that the junking of the petitions "does not by any means make the resolution valid" adding that "the issue is far from over."

"The SC ruling that the Lozano petition was premature may be a minor setback for Arroyo and her allies. This means that Arroyo's allies in the Lower House will not get their wish of having the SC hastily and prematurely deciding on the validity of HR 1109," Reyes said.

"The play to get a quick and favorable SC decision was temporarily foiled," he pointed out.

"Because of the con-ass threat, the SONA protests may be bigger than ever," he said.

Sensors ready

Sensors said they would not hesitate to walk out of the SONA if Mrs. Arroyo's House allies use the occasion to try to convene a con-ass.

"We are giving this too much importance when we should not. Out of respect for her, I will attend but if the House (will convene con-ass), I will walk out," Sen. Richard Gordon said at a press conference.

"Some quarters have floated the idea of forcing the con-ass at the joint session of Congress on July 27 in order to create a justiciable controversy that the Supreme Court will be forced to resolve. They are dead-end on

pushing our nation to the brink of chaos and a constitutional crisis just to advance their narrow political interests," Sen. Pia Cayetano said.

"They should just drop the plan or expect walkouts and boycotts by senators and independent-minded House members in protest and in defiance of their sham political exercise," she said.

"The dismissal of the petition by the high court is expected and correct, because there's obviously no justiciable controversy to rule on yet," she added.

"We shouldn't let the current administration think that the people will simply watch and stand idly by and that they can get away with this reckless attempt," Sen. Francis Pangilinan said. "We must remember how HR 1109 caught us all by surprise. Let's not allow that to happen again."

But Gordon and Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said they would not support Sen. Panfilo Lacson's call for "tax revolt."

"It will trigger chaos," Biazon said.

Conspiracy

Lozano, meanwhile, accused senators of conspiring with administration congressmen in keeping HR 1109 alive.

"Clear as day-delay for dough, to cover up the inaction for consideration, the senators concerned pretend lack of justiciable controversy even if HR 1109 admits the same which has ripened for judicial determination after its approval," Lozano said.

"Why did the senators not simply hold an emergency session and passed immediately a simple counter resolution to slay con-ass?" he asked.

Speaker Prospero Nograles, meanwhile, shrugged off Lozano's disbarment case against him and some lawyer-congressmen.

He said that if the SC found no merit in the petition of Lozano against HR 1109, then it has more reason to throw out the disbarment case.

"The case? It's finished. The SC already said he is premature. And we didn't violate anything. The SC didn't say we did," Nograles said.

Taxes, con-ass different Nograles and his colleagues also took a jab at Senator Lacson for calling for a "tax revolt"

saying the con-ass move and the government's mandate to collect taxes are two different things.

"Let us not listen to this call. It's counter productive. Why? When corporations and large taxpayers do not pay taxes in time they will be slapped penalties and surcharges and later on they will be forced to pay anyway at a later date," the House leader pointed out.

"The question is, will the proponents of this tax disbedi-

ence or revolt be willing to shoulder the penalties and surcharges of the taxpayers who joined the so-called tax revolt?"

Manila Rep. Amado Bagatsing said a tax revolt cannot compel the House to abandon con-ass. "That is very irresponsible. Why link con-ass with tax revolt?" Bagatsing said.

"That is an irresponsible statement by Sen. Lacson because how will the government provide the basic and essential

services to our people (if there is a tax revolt)? President Arroyo will prove her critics wrong in their claims that she will hold on to power," Nueva Ecija Rep. Rodolfo Antonio, chairman of the House committee on public order and safety, said.

Lacson called on businessmen and ordinary taxpayers to withhold paying their taxes until there are clear signs that proponents of Charter change are abandoning their plans and that President Arroyo is stepping down in June 2010. (www.philstar.com)

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) for the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) Project is now available for review. Those on the Project mailing list have already received copies of the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS is also available for download on the Project website www.TMT-HawaiiEIS.org or in hard copy at all local public libraries. We hope you have the opportunity to review the Draft EIS and contact us with your comments related to the Project. There are a number of avenues to submit your comments during the 45-day Draft EIS comment period which ends on July 7, including:

- Comment using the comment tool on our website: www.TMT-HawaiiEIS.org
- Leave us a message on our hotline: 1-866-284-1716 (toll-free)
- Attend one of our public meetings. Public meetings will follow the format of the scoping meetings: open house, presentations, and comment period.

Area	Date*	Location*	Time*
Waimea	June 16 (Tue)	Waimea Elementary School Cafeteria	5-8pm
Hilo	June 17 (Wed)	Hilo High School Cafeteria	4-8pm
Puna	June 18 (Thur)	Pāhōa High School Cafeteria	5-8pm
Kaū	June 22 (Mon)	Kaū High/Pāhala Elementary School Cafeteria	5-8pm
Hāwii	June 23 (Tue)	Kohala Cultural Center	5-8pm
Kona	June 24 (Wed)	Kealahou Elementary School Cafeteria	5-8pm
Honolulu	June 25 (Thur)	Farrington High School Cafeteria	5-8pm

*More information regarding the meetings is available on the project website.

- You may also mail written comments to: TMT Project EIS Process
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We look forward to seeing you at the public meetings and continuing to work with the communities of Hawaii on this Project. To request language interpretation, an auxiliary aid, or service please leave a message on our hotline 1-866-284-1716 and we will work with you to provide assistance. Mahalo for your time and interest.



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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Erap to Block GMA Bid for Prime Minister

By Jose Rodel Clapano /
Thursday, June 18, 2009

MANILA, Philippines – Former President Joseph Estrada vowed yesterday to run for congressman of San Juan to block President Arroyo's bid to become prime minister should her House allies succeed in establishing a parliamentary form of government through a constituent assembly.

"I can also easily run for Congress in San Juan to ensure that President Arroyo does not become prime minister," Estrada said.

Administration officials are expected to contest Estrada's congressional bid by claiming that he is barred from public office under the terms of the presidential pardon granted by Mrs. Arroyo.

The Sandiganbayan con-

victed Estrada of plunder but he was pardoned a month after his conviction in 2007. Estrada said he regained his political rights after his pardon.

This developed as gmanews.tv reported that the President's eldest son Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo had hinted at running for governor of Pampanga. This could pave the way for his mother to replace him as the representative of Pampanga's second district.

"If I follow my heart, I want a third term. But of course I won't deny the fact that many of the political leaders there, even the clergy and those supporting, who support (Pampanga) Gov. (Ed) Panlilio, are egging me on to run because he's a non-performing asset," Mikey Arroyo told gmanews.tv.

It was United Opposition president and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay who first raised the

scenario of Mrs. Arroyo running for a congressional seat in Pampanga in preparation for the establishment of a parliamentary system of government where she can emerge as prime minister.

"President Arroyo may opt to run for Congress to make herself House speaker, then prime minister," Binay said.

Panlilio earlier said that Mrs. Arroyo had been visiting the second district of Pampanga in the past weeks apparently on unofficial campaign sorties.

"She's the only president who has made 16 visits to Pampanga for four months, fourteen of which were done in the second district which includes, among others, Porac and Guagua," Panlilio said. "She is eyeing the prime ministership. Street concreting and construction of covered courts are being made in Pampanga."

"Becoming a congress-

woman, then House speaker and then prime minister is one of her options in her desire to stay in power," Panlilio said.

"The message here is still to stop con-ass or Cha-cha in any form. This is just to show that the idea of President Arroyo running for Congress to keep herself in power forever is an audacious if not a ridiculous idea," Estrada spokesperson Margaux Salcedo said.

"If the administration insists on keeping Mrs. Arroyo in power beyond 2010 by a change to a parliamentary system of government and by making Mrs. Arroyo prime minister, they can be certain that the opposition is ready to counter their actions to ensure that she does not hold on to power forever," Salcedo said.

Mikey Arroyo said he was preparing for his election bid.

Asked whether he would seek a gubernatorial post or a

congressional seat, Mikey merely repeated, "election bid."

President Arroyo currently has four relatives in the House of Representatives: Mikey, 40, on his second term as representative of Pampanga's second district; another son Diosdado Macapagal Arroyo, 34 on his first term as representative of Camarines Sur's 1st district; Ignacio Arroyo, 58, brother-in-law, on his second term as representative of Negros Occidental's 5th district; and Ma. Lourdes T. Arroyo, sister-in-law, on her first term as representative of Kasanganga party-list

In his interview with gmanews.tv, Mikey refused to call themselves a dynasty, saying a dynasty only exists if a number of family members get elected in one geographic area.

"We win, what can we do, my God. And we win in different places... so we are not a dynasty," he said in Filipino.

(www.philstar.com)

Panlilio to Back GMA Rival If She Runs for Congress

By Ding Cervantes /
Thursday, June 18, 2009

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga. Philippines – Gov. Ed Panlilio said he is ready to find and extend sup-

port to an alternative congressional candidate should President Arroyo run in the second district of the province in next year's elections.

"Kapampangans are intelligent people," he said, ex-

pressing confidence that "we can find the right person" to be fielded as candidate against Mrs. Arroyo in her district covering the towns of Guagua, Lubao, Sasman, Floridablanca, Sta. Rita, and Porac.

Panlilio told The STAR that if elections were held now, there is no doubt that she would win overwhelmingly in the district.

But he said many are beginning to realize that the Philippines has been disgraced under the Arroyo administration.

Asked whether he would support an alternative candidate in case Mrs. Arroyo decides to run for Congress, Panlilio said, "We might go toward that direction and we will consult with different sectors for a collective decision on this."

Malacañang has insisted that Mrs. Arroyo's frequent visits to the second district where she is a registered voter merely showed her affection for her cabalen and that she would not seek the congressional post now occupied by her eldest son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo. There are reports that Mikey is eyeing the governorship.

Panlilio, a Catholic priest-turned-politician, said recent developments point to the "probability" of Mrs. Arroyo running for congresswoman.

"There's the Lakas-Kampikam merger, the push for con-ass (constituent assembly) to amend the Constitution in the House, and the unusual frequent visits of the President to her district. Put all these to-

gether and people will be convinced she will really run for Congress," he said.

Panlilio said he agreed with others who suspect that Mrs. Arroyo's objective is to become prime minister should the con-ass succeed in shifting to a parliamentary form of government. As prime minister, she would probably be immune from prosecution, he added.

"If she is a woman of dignity, she must face the allegations (against her)," he said.

Two years ago, Panlilio stirred a controversy when he exposed the so-called payola scam in Malacañang, alleging that governors who attended a meeting in the Palace were given a cash gift of P500,000.

Panlilio won the gubernatorial race as an independent candidate against pro-administration bets: then governor Mark Lapid and former provincial board member Lilia Pineda.

The group Kaya Natin! has been urging him to run for president in next year's elections, but Panlilio remains undecided.

"The surveys show I am rating rather very low," he said.

Panlilio has even said that if he becomes president, he would prosecute Mrs. Arroyo for alleged anomalies in her administration.(www.philstar.com)

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LEGAL NOTES

Effects of Change of Status



By Reuben S. Seguritan

change of status to F-1 with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

There are important considerations that should be taken into account when applying for the change of status. The application must be filed before the expiration of the alien's current status. He/she should not pursue the new activity until the application is approved. It is advisable to maintain his/her non-immigrant status while waiting for the decision on the change of status application.

Traveling outside the U.S. while the application for a change of status is pending would be deemed an abandonment of the application. But in the case of an application to change status to H-1B, the approval of the H-1B petition will be valid and can be used to apply for an H-1B visa at a U.S. consulate abroad.

This is where the difference between 'visa' and 'status' comes into play.

A visa is an official travel document issued by a U.S. con-

sulate overseas allowing a foreign national to apply for admission into the U.S. It is the computerized document with the picture of the foreign national placed on his/her passport. There are several types of visa classifications depending upon the specific purpose for entering the U.S. The visa is like a 'key to the door' to enter the U.S.

Once a foreign national is legally admitted into the U.S., it is the date stamped on the I-94 admission/departure card that governs his/her legal immigration status and the duration of his/her authorized stay in the U.S. So, even if the visa remains valid, if the date stamped on the I-94 card has expired, the person becomes out of status.

If the change of status is approved, the foreign national remains legally in status in the U.S. even if his/her visa has expired or is of a different classification. For example, the person may still have an unexpired F-1 (student) visa on her passport while being on H (temporary worker) status in the U.S. It is

his status in the U.S. that determines the legality of his/her authorized stay in the U.S. and not the visa. The new validity dates of his/her status would be indicated on the I-797 approval notice and I-94 card.

If the change of status is denied and the applicant is maintaining a valid non-immigrant status, he/she will be allowed to retain and continue in that original status until its validity date. Otherwise, the applicant would just have to leave the U.S. and apply for the new visa in a U.S. consulate abroad and re-enter under a new non-immigrant classification.

The applicant should bear in mind that overstaying beyond 180 days without status would preclude the person from returning to the U.S. for a period of three (3) years once the person goes out of the country. Being out of status for one year or more will prevent the person from re-entering the U.S. for a period of ten (10) years if the person travels outside and tries to return to the U.S.

If that person with an approved change of status intends to travel abroad, it would be necessary that he/she obtains a new visa from a U.S. consulate abroad reflecting his/her newly approved non-immigrant classification in order to re-enter the U.S.

These are the exceptions: F (student), J (exchange visitor), M (vocational student), or Q (international exchange program participant) non-immigrants are allowed to travel for 30 or fewer days to Canada, Mexico or adjacent lands except Cuba, and to reapply for admission to the U.S. presenting their I-94 and I-20 student eligibility verification form for students or DS-2019 (formerly IAP 66) for exchange visitors.

Another exception involves Canadian citizens who are exempt from visa requirement except those seeking E-1/E-1 (Treaty Investor) or K (Fiancee) status. They need only show their I-94 and I-797 approval forms.

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

If a nonimmigrant decides to pursue a different purpose or engage in another activity in the U.S., he has to apply for a change of status.

For instance, a person who entered as a student with an F-1 visa gets a job offer after finishing his/her studies in the U.S. Given the change of purpose of the stay in the U.S. from studying to working, the prospective employer may petition for a change of status on his/her behalf from F-1 to H-1B.

Likewise, a person who originally came as a tourist with a B-2 visa to visit family and friends may later on want to pursue studies in the U.S. Instead of going back to his/her country to apply for a new F-1 visa, the person can opt to apply for a

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Gas Station Loses ATM to Robbers

By Rhodina Villanueva / Thursday, June 18, 2009

MANILA, Philippines – Not content with simply taking cash from an automated teller ma-

chine (ATM), eight heavily armed men forcibly took the machine itself early yesterday.

The ATM was installed in a gasoline station along the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) in Muntinlupa City.

Police Officer 3 Buenaventura de la Cuesta of the Muntinlupa Police Station Investigation Division said the incident occurred around 3 a.m. along the southbound lane of SLEX in Barangay Putatan, Muntinlupa City.

De la Cuesta said the suspects were on board a white L-300 van parked near the Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI) ATM booth located within the Shell gasoline station premises.

He said the suspects, who

were armed with long and short firearms, immediately went to the booth and started removing the ATM with a bolt cutter while their companions kept the security guards at bay.

The suspects were done in three minutes and immediately sped off.

One of the security guards,



Elpidio Jungco Jr., told police investigators that since they were not issued guns and only night sticks, they were not able to do anything.

The suspects filed in the direction of Laguna.

De la Cuesta said a follow-up investigation to track down the suspects is being conducted.

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MAINLAND NEWS

'Cora Cooks Pancit' Hits Nation's Bookstores

A children's book by second generation Filipino-Italian author Dorina K. Lazo Gilmore entitled "Cora Cooks Pancit" was recently released on Amazon.com and now available in bookstores nationwide.

A heartwarming story about a Filipino girl who cooks her favorite noodle dish with her mother, the book has so far received favorable reviews. Gilmore says the book is not just about cooking pancit.

"It is about celebrating the family and cooking with your parents," says Gilmore, whose grandparents from her father's side emigrated from the Philippines to Hawaii. Her lolo, Frank Lazo, later met his bride, Cora Taclindo in Hawaii and was a cook for the Filipino farmworkers who picked strawberries and grapes in the fields. Gilmore's father and grandparents were her links to her Asian heritage.

"They were intentional about the Filipino culture," she says. "We would go to different parties, Filipino clubs, watch



performances and would try the food."

In "Cora Cooks Pancit," Gilmore infuses her experiences being in the kitchen with her Lola Cora, whose specialties were pancit, chicken adobo and lumpia.

Gilmore chose pancit rather than adobo, another popular Filipino dish, since the noodle theme gives it universal appeal.

"I chose pancit because I felt like it could relate to other Asian noodle dishes," she says.

"Cora Cooks Pancit" is Gilmore's third picture book and is published by Shen's Books, with illustrations by Kristi Valiant. More information is available online at: www.shens.com. (*Asian Journal*)

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Filipina Golfers Honored For Accomplishments

Professional golfers Jennifer Rosales and Dorothy Delasin received the Golden Cultural Heritage Award during special ceremonies at the McDonald's LPGA Championship in Maryland.

Willy C. Gaa, Philippine ambassador to the U.S., pinned Philippine flags on Rosales and Delasin and presented the awards to the golfers for their "outstanding and meritorious contributions to raising awareness of and deepening appreciation for the Philippines, her culture and her peoples through excellence at the high-

est level of professional golf."

The awards are part of the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C.'s month-long commemoration of the 111th Anniversary of Philippine Independence which highlights the achievements of Filipinos and Filipino Americans. Rosales and Delasin won the 2008 Women's World Cup of Golf in South Africa. The



(L-R) Jennifer Rosales, Amb. Willy C. Gaa, and Dorothy Delasin

awarding was covered by LPGA.com. (DFA)

Lecture on Philippines' Oldest Book Draws Diverse Crowd



Visiting Filipino librarian Von Totanes recently delivered a lecture at the Library of Congress' Asian Division reading room on the oldest book printed in the Philippines—the "Doctrina Christiana"—and its significance on Philippine publishing.

The Library of Congress serves as the repository for the

only existing copy of the "Doctrina Christiana," which was published on rice paper in Manila in 1593. It is part of the Library's Rosenwald Collection in the Rare Books Division and was put on display during the lecture, courtesy of curator Daniel De Simone.

Totanes, who is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto and has a special inter-

est in rare books, argued that the importance of the book "lies in the fact that they are physical reminders of the plurality of the nature and culture of the Filipino and the Philippines, and that Filipino culture is what it is today because of contact with the Chinese, the Spanish and the Americans."

"Doctrina Christiana," is actually one of two published in 1593, but is commonly considered the first book published in the Philippines. The second is entitled the "Shih-lu." Totanes argued that there is no way of telling which one was published first.

Totanes' lecture was co-sponsored by the Embassy of the Philippines, Library of Congress Asian Division Friends Society and the Library of Congress Asian American Association and is part of a month-long series of activities held to commemorate the 111th anniversary of Philippine Independence. (DFA)

GLOBAL NEWS

Austria Launches New Book on Museum Collection of Philippine Objects

A new publication entitled "The Philippines: Early Collections" was launched in Vienna to bring public attention to the Ethnology Museum of Vienna's extensive collection of ethnological objects and unpublished photos of the Philippines dating back to the 18th and 19th century.

The book, a joint project of the Embassy of the Philippines

and the museum, was presented at a reception hosted by Linglingy Lacañlale, Philippine Ambassador to Austria, on the occasion of the 111th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the Philippines.

The 92-page book highlights over 50 key pieces of the Museum's 1,422 objects of the Philippines, which range from bulol from Ifugao, blankets

from Abra, suklang (basket hat) from Bontok, gold jewelry from Batanes, musical instruments of Luzon, leg adornments from Mindoro, and amulets and swords (kampilan) from Mindanao. The Museum's early collections were acquired from Alexander Schadenberg, Karl Alexander Anselm Freiherr von Hügel and Baron Richard von Drasche-Wartinberg. (DFA)

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JUNE TO AUGUST—Overseas Absentee Voting Registration for Filipino citizens who wish to vote in the presidential elections in May 2010. Registrants may come to the Consulate in person with their Philippine passports to accomplish the application form.

JULY 10-14TH —Ambassadors and Consul Generals Tour to the Philippines, a special package tour for the public.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

OFCC GOLDEN JUBILEE PRESIDENT'S BALL/ FRIDAY

June 26, 2009 • 6 pm • Hilton Hawaii Village Resort & SPA H
• Contact event chair Leo Gozar at 230-0088 or Lina Longboy at 375 0828

OAHU FILIPINO COMMUNITY COUNCIL (OFCC) ANNUAL CONVENTION/ SATURDAY

June 27, 2009 • 7:30 am - 4 pm • Hilton Hawaii Village Resort & SPA
• Contact event chair Carlota Ader at 688-3215 or Lina Longboy at 375 0828 for more details

FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII INSTALLATION BANQUET

/ SATURDAY
July 11, 2009 • 6 pm. • Hilton Hawaiian Village • Call Rose Mendoza at 371-3902 or Bennett Evangelista at 398-5988

CABUGAO GLOBAL REUNION, ALOHA RECEPTION/ FRIDAY
July 17, 2009 • 6 pm. • FilCom Center

CABUGAO, GLOBAL REUNION, GALA NIGHT/ SATURDAY
July 18, 2009 • 6 pm. • Tapa Ballroom, Hilton Hawaiian Village

CABUGAO, GLOBAL REUNION, FAMILY PICNIC/ SUNDAY
July 19, 2009 • 9 am. • Kaneohe Beach

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VISAYAN CENTENNIAL EVENTS VISAYAN CENTENNIAL AWARDS GALA / SUNDAY
July 19, 2009 • 6 pm. • Hale Koa Hotel, Waikiki

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