

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ DECEMBER 5, 2009 ◆

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EDITORIALS

Christmas Traditions Worth Holding On To

For the typical Filipino, particularly those who were born and raised in the Philippines, the word "Christmas" conjures up memories of festive celebrations with family and friends. Christmas is the most anticipated day of the year and the one holiday that entire families celebrated together.

As the only pre-dominantly Christian nation in Asia, Christmas is near and dear to the hearts of many Filipinos. Long ago, different regions in the Philippines began celebrating Christmas with various colorful festivities, like the world famous giant lantern parade hosted by the town of San Fernando, Pangpanga. Some towns held special re-enactments of the Christmas story (Panunuluyan), while others followed the Spanish tradition of attending early morning masses (Simbang Gabi).

Filipino families also began their own unique Christmas traditions that were continued by successive generations—traditions such as making Christmas lanterns (parol), sharing a Christmas Eve meal together (Noche Buena), singing carols (Namamako) and opening presents. Locally, the Fil-Com Center in Waipahu has hosted annual Christmas (Pasko) celebrations that replicate the various elements of a traditional Filipino Christmas. Nowhere else in Hawaii can one find a singular event that celebrates all these Filipino Christmas traditions under one roof. Kudos to the Fil-Com Center and the numerous community groups for co-hosting this spectacular event that celebrates the richness of the Filipino culture.

As an ethnic group, we need to hold fast to these rich and uniquely Filipino Christmas traditions and see to it that they are passed on to the next generation. Such traditions connect us to our past, bind us closer to our families and leave an indelible reminder of who we are and where we came from.

Woods Finds Himself in Woods

Golf megastar Tiger Woods has found himself in the center of unwanted media attention of late. Speculation ran rampant after he crashed his Cadillac outside his Orlando, Florida mansion in the early morning hours of November 28. His wife Elin Nordegren, a former Swedish model, was the first at his side. It took a public apology a few days later for some of the details to leak out—details of alleged extramarital affairs with several women.

What's particularly troublesome is that Woods' affairs allegedly occurred while his wife was pregnant with their first child. If true, Woods will join a growing list of male athletes and public figures who have strayed from their marriage vows. The short list includes NBA all-star Kobe Bryant, talk show host David Letterman, South Carolina governor Mark Sanford and yes, even a former U.S. president.

In the Philippines, extramarital affairs are common, despite widespread devotion to the Catholic faith. A macho culture, in fact, encourages men to father several families—men like Joseph Estrada who was elected president in 1998 despite fathering children with several women. The sordid details of Philippine movie stars and politicians' love lives are also a staple for many celebrity gossip columns.

As for Woods, it remains to be seen whether his wife will stand by him. If she chooses to, the couple will need the help of a professional to work things through. Whatever the outcome, let's hope that Mr. and Mrs. Woods—for the sake of their marriage and their two children—will find their way out of the woods and into the clearing, so to speak.

But rather than pass judgment, the real reason here is to check your heart and realize that marital infidelity is a big problem among married couples. Extramarital affairs have in fact taken down better men than Tiger Woods. If it can happen to him, it can surely happen to anyone.

FROM THE PUBLISHER



loha and welcome to the latest issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle! Let us be the first to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I don't know about you, but with Thanksgiving now behind us and with the weather becoming a bit cooler, it's really beginning to feel a lot like Christmas.



Many Filipinos, especially those shopaholics, were undoubtedly among the tens of thousands of shoppers who flocked to the malls on the Day after Thanksgiving in search of bargains. Despite all of the Black Friday hoopla, early signs indicate that the 2009 shopping season will be a ho-hum year for retailers. Still, we hope that you got the deal you wanted and more importantly, that you have enough money left over for the rest of your Christmas presents.

Speaking of Christmas, this issue's cover story is by Raymond L.I. Liongson who writes about "Pasko sa FilCom"—a free event organized by volunteers from the Fil-Com Center and various Filipino organizations. The entire family is sure to enjoy the entertainment and numerous activities that will be held, including children's games, cooking demonstrations, caroling, a parol making contest and other traditional Filipino Christmas festivities. "Pasko sa FilCom" is quickly becoming a favorite community event and perhaps second only to the Filipino Fiesta & Parade in terms of involvement and bringing together the entire Filipino community. We hope you and your family will make plans to attend this very special event, which is scheduled for Sunday, December 13, 2009 from 2 pm to 7 pm at the Fil-Com Center in Waipahu. Please read more beginning on page 4.

Also in this issue, Pearl Hahn, a policy analyst for the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii submitted a commentary on the negative effects that the Affordable Health Care for America Act would have on Hawaii's economy and private health insurers. The Act requires individuals to purchase health insurance and employers to provide coverage for employees or else pay a hefty penalty. Please read Hahn's commentary on page 7 and see if you agree with her or not.

In closing, we hope that you will enjoy reading the many timely and informative articles and columns in this issue, particularly Governor's Column (page 3), Legislative Connection (page 6), Immigration Guide (page 7), Family Corner (page 12) and Legal Notes (page 13).

In closing, thank you again for supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. It has truly been a pleasure to serve all of our readers. From our family to yours...*Maligayang Pasko!*

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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 currency \$90. Copyright 2006. The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle Inc. is located at 94-356 Waipahu Depot, Waipahu, HI 96797. Telephone (808) 878-9500 Facsimile (808) 878-1820. 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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GOVERNOR'S COLUMN



By Gov. Linda Lingle

Successful China Trade Mission Bodes Well For Hawaii

ties and new markets for Hawaii businesses to increase our presence abroad, encourage international partnerships—as I did in 2006 when I visited the Philippines—and strengthen our economy in the long term.

I recently concluded a six-city visit to the People's Republic of China, home to approximately one-fifth of the world's population. Our delegation focused on promoting tourism, clean energy partnerships and the marketing of Hawaii products and services. I would like to share some highlights of this successful mission.

To increase the number of Chinese visitors to Hawaii, our delegation met with high-ranking government and travel industry officials in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hainan and Hong Kong.

One of these meetings was with Jon Huntsman, the new U.S. Ambassador to China. We continued talks which began in Honolulu last August on how to expedite approval of leisure travel visas for Chinese tourists who wish to visit Hawaii and the

U.S. Ambassador Huntsman is also improving processing of last-minute visas for business travelers who wish to attend meetings or conferences in Hawaii.

Another key meeting was with Chairman Shao Qiwei of the China National Tourism Association (CNTA) who updated our delegation on China's growing outbound tourism market.

My meeting with Chairman Shao builds on the partnership we began during my first mission to China in 2005. Among the outcomes of that trip was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase travel between the Hawaii and China.

The first regularly scheduled airline service between China and Hawaii is expected to begin in 2010. This service from Beijing to Honolulu will be provided by Hainan Airlines, which plans to increase the number of direct flights as demand for overseas travel accelerates. During this trip, the State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism signed a memorandum of coop-

eration with Hainan Airlines to form a working group and designate liaisons to ensure this important air service will begin.

Another focus of our mission was developing clean energy partnerships that will result in better air quality for China's people and an improved economy for Hawaii's people. Chinese officials view our state as an ideal test location for deploying clean energy technologies and engineering solutions, and we look forward to continuing our work in this area.

The Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, with its goal of obtaining 70 percent of our energy from clean sources by 2030, serves as a model for Chinese officials, who want to achieve 30 percent renewable energy usage by 2030.

To further this exciting development, the China Academy of Engineering will co-sponsor the 2010 Asia-Pacific Clean Energy Summit & Expo in Hawaii next September.

Our mission also focused on increasing exports of products and services from Hawaii to China. We will reach out to promoting China markets by opening a

series of "Hawaii House" products and services showrooms and distribution centers, with the first one planned for Shanghai. This significant effort is being funded entirely by the China Ministry of Commerce and China Association of International Trade. This effort will reduce the risks for Hawaii's small and medium-sized businesses that want to enter the emerging China consumer market.

By the end of the year, we will agree to a plan and sign an MOU with the Ministry of Commerce to bring Hawaii-made products and services to China. Next January or February, China will send a delegation to Hawaii to identify products that would sell well in the Chinese market. My administration looks forward to working with Hawaii's business community to ensure companies are ready to take advantage of this important opportunity.

I look forward to providing additional updates for readers of the Filipino Chronicle as our partnership with China grows even stronger and lays the groundwork for Hawaii's long-term economic growth. Mabuhay!

On December 7, I visited Pearl Harbor for a remembrance ceremony for the 68th anniversary of

Japan's attack on America's naval fleet. This year's theme was "But Not in Shame: The Aftermath of Pearl Harbor," which recalls the words of Gen. Jonathan Wainwright, who on May 6, 1942 surrendered to the Japanese when the brave American and Filipino troops he commanded at Bataan could no longer hold out.

Ultimately, Filipino and American troops emerged victorious and retook Corregidor on February 26, 1945. I am deeply grateful for the Filipino soldiers who served in World War II, as well as the Filipino-Americans who serve in our armed forces today.

Looking to the future, I continue to pursue new opportuni-

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Pasko sa Fil-Com to Replicate Filipino Christmas Traditions

By Raymond L. Liangson

Of you've ever wondered about or have yet to experience a Filipino-style Christmas celebration, then "Pasko sa Fil-Com" may just be the event for you.

Scheduled for December 13, 2009 from 2 pm – 7 pm at the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu, this festive event will replicate traditional Filipino Christmas celebrations as observed in the Philippines.

"The annual Pasko sa Fil-Com is a Filipino Christmas celebration in Hawaii," says Serafin Colmenares, Jr., of the Congress of Visayan Organizations (COVO). "It is one event that brings all Filipinos together and educates our children of the richness of their cultural heritage. It also allows us to share our culture with other ethnic groups in Hawaii."

Themed Tayo'y Magbigayan (let's give and share), the annual event is open to the public and echoes the spirit of the Christmas season.

"Filipinos always look for-

ward to Pasko," says Beatrice Ramos-Razon, past president of the Hawaii chapter of the University of the Philippines Alumni Association. "It is a good way to be together, share the spirit of the season and celebrate our culture."

Pasko, or Christmas, is the longest and most anticipated event of the year in the Philippines where the playing of Christmas songs and the preparations start as early as September. As in the past, this year's Pasko sa Fil-Com will feature activities coordinated by various groups and organizations.

"We have reached out to and involved more people and groups, so we are hoping to have a great celebration," says Ethel Alikpala-Ward of Kaneohe. "Through Pasko sa Fil-Com, we are able to showcase Filipino

Christmas traditions to the people of this island."

Giving and Sharing

A live KNDI broadcast will air at the Fil-Com Center from 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm and encourage the public to donate toys for children in the Philippines and canned food for the Hawaii Food Bank.

"We hope to collect 10 balikbayan-size boxes of new or slightly used toys which will be sent to the Philippines through Hawaiian Airlines," says Tony Sagayador, who initiated the collaborative effort with KNDI, the Fil-Com Center and Hawaiian Airlines. "Only toys in excellent condition will be accepted."

Entertainment

The program will open with Honolulu's pride and joy—the Royal Hawaiian Band, which will fill the air with Christmas and Filipino music.

Other musical groups will entertain the crowd. The Kanikapila Singers, composed



The *Pabitan* during the Pasko sa Filcom celebration

of students at Leeward Community College under the direction of Prof. Marilyn Kim, will sing popular and contemporary Christmas songs.

Indigenous music from the Southern Philippines will also be played by the Mahalohalo Kulintang Ensemble. Kulintang is an ancient instrumental form composed of a row of small, horizontally-laid gongs played melodically, accompanied by larger suspended gongs and drums. Kulintang music actually predates the Islamic presence in the Philippines and was introduced by its natives collectively known as *lunad*.

A new and unique ensemble formed by the Fil-Com Center, the Banda Kawayan, is sure to amaze the audience with their musical instruments made of bamboo, including the marimba, angklung, tongatong, kalagong, kalatok and scratcher.

"This is an innovative group that will capture the hearts of everyone," says Beatrice Ramos-Razon, who joined Banda Kawayan and plays one of the indigenous instruments.

The Silangan Singers, conducted by Ruth Imperial-Pfeifer, will also perform traditional Filipino Christmas favorites.

Caroling Contest

Da-igon, an hour-long caroling contest, will bring groups together to a friendly choral competition. A Visayan word for caroling, Da-igon is coordinated by COVO. Limited to a maximum of five groups, the

caroling contest is open to non-professional choral groups only.

Participating groups, with members between five and 20, will vie for cash prizes of \$150 for first place, \$100 for second and \$50 for third. Each group will be limited to three songs, with a time limit of not more than 10 minutes, including entry and exit. A group shall choose the songs to sing; however, one of the songs should be in any of the Filipino languages. Singing groups shall be dressed in any Filipino costume.

Parol Contest

Organizers will also hold a parol contest. A parol is the iconic Christmas lantern popularly displayed in the Philippines during Christmas. Traditionally a five-point star, the modern parol has evolved into other designs and enhanced by electronics and technology.

Entries for this year's contest can be a parol of any shape and form. The frame can be of bamboo or any material such as wood, plastic, wire or metal. It should measure no less than a foot but no bigger than two feet in size. Tassels, if used, will not be included in the measurement. Ornaments can be hand-made, purchased or made using recycled materials. A non-refundable entry fee of \$10 will be charged for each entry. Entries must be submitted before 1 pm on December 13.

Judging criteria are as follows:

- Creativity/originality—40



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- percent
- Workmanship—30 percent
- Symbolism—10 percent
- Earth Friendly—10 percent
- Presentation—10 percent

The first place winner will receive a round-trip ticket to the Philippines, courtesy of Everlasting Travel. Second and third place winners will be awarded \$400 and \$200, respectively. All participants will receive certificates of participation. The parol contest is coordinated by the United Filipino Council of Hawaii.

Tabletop Christmas Tree Contest

A tabletop Christmas tree contest, coordinated by the Oahu Filipino Community Council, is another popular Pasko event. Entries should be no more than three feet high, from the base to the top of the tree. The base should not exceed three feet in diameter. Ornaments can be hand-made, purchased or made using recycled materials and should reflect the theme Pasko sa Fil-Com or "Christmas in the Philippines."

A \$5 non-refundable fee is required per entry. Entries must be submitted by 1 pm on December 13 at the Fil-Com Center. A round-trip ticket to the Philippines courtesy of Hawaiian Airlines awaits the first prize winner. The second place winner will receive \$300 (or equivalent), while the third place winner will pocket \$100 (or equivalent).

Criteria include originality (50 percent), workmanship (30 percent), relevance to the theme (10 percent) and presentation (10 percent). All participants will receive certificates of participation.

Christmas Tree Ornament Contest**PASKO SA FIL-COM PROGRAM**

2 pm – 3 pm	Music by the Royal Hawaiian Band Bandmaster Michael Nakasone, Conductor
3 pm – 4 pm	Da-igon (Caroling Contest)
4 pm – 5:30 pm	Entertainment <i>Kanikapila Singers</i> <i>Mahalohalo Kolintang Ensemble</i> <i>Himig at Indak</i> <i>Banda Kawayan</i> <i>Silangan Singers</i>
5:30 pm – 6 pm	Panunuluyan
6 pm – 7 pm	Simbang Gabi
7 pm	Music with Fani

NOTE: Children's games and activities, demonstrations, preparation of traditional Filipino Christmas foods, reliving of the Filipino Christmas traditions through cultural replications and food sales will be held throughout the event.

Sponsored by Hawaiian Airlines, participants are to bring originally-made Christmas tree ornaments. No purchased commercial tree ornaments will be eligible.

Hawaiian Airlines will be setting up a Christmas tree where the ornaments will be hung. Various giveaways and prizes will be awarded to participants.

Revisiting the Culture

Many traditional Christmas practices will be replicated at the event. Mano, pot, a Spanish-influenced tradition, will be demonstrated by the Filipino American University Women (FAUW). This age-old practice is an expression of respect and love for the elders, especially grandparents, when the hand of the elder is taken by a child and pressed on the forehead of the latter.

The Filipino American League of Engineers and Architects (FALEA) will bring to life Namamasko!—the Tagalog word for "caroling" which is a tradition where people go from house to house and bring the spirit of Christmas through music and songs. After singing, carolers are given a treat. It is equivalent to the Halloween trick-or-treat, minus the scary costumes but with all the treats and fun. FALEA will set up a bahay kubo, a rural house made of bamboo and other light materials, to recreate the Philippine atmosphere.

Almost synonymous to Philippine caroling are the kumbacheros or street bands comprised of mostly children or youth. These carolers use improvised musical instruments such as flattened bottle caps strung together as tambourines, milk cans with pebbles as maracas, cans as drums, or just about anything that can be used to create sound



The Panunuluyan being re-enacted during the event

and rhythm.

Various games and activities for children will also be coordinated by different organizations. The University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Hawaii (UPAAH) will host traditional games such as the pabitin, kadang-kadang and patintero.

Katipunan, a group composed of students in the Tagalog program at UH-Manoa, will demonstrate and teach the making of parol. KASAMA, the Philippine Studies Students Society at Leeward Community College, will conduct the Pasko Bingo and facilitate the jeepney and vinta-making. A scavenger hunt will be set up by the Filipino American Historical Society of Hawaii (FAHSOH).

Token prizes will be given away in these activities.

Food has been the centerpiece in all Filipino festivities, including Pasko. The preparation of traditional Filipino Christmas delicacies will be demonstrated by different organizations.

samples as fast as we could bake them," says Fil-Com President Geminiano Arre, Jr. "We ran out of galapong or dough before we could sell a single bibingka. Baking them was hard work but the members of the Board of Directors who baked them had a lot of fun."

The sorbetes cart, with Philippine-made ice cream, is expected to be an attraction. The sorbetes will be manned by the Filipino Junior Chamber of Commerce. Salabat (ginger ale) and palamig will be served, among other drinks. Food vendors will bring a diverse selection of Filipino and Southeast Asian foods.

Panunuluyan and Simbang Gabi

The re-enactment of the search for the inn and the nativity scene is a popular theme in the predominantly Christian Philippines. Called Panunuluyan, the play portrays the journey of Joseph and Mary and the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, taking an ethnic spin with the cast speaking in Tagalog, Ilocano and Cebuano.

"The Panunuluyan is a re-

(Continued on page 12)

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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

Recycling Can Be Great For Economy

less than obtaining original stock, as New Zealand has long ago discovered. New Zealand has a worldwide reputation for its successful community-led grassroots recycling enterprises. The country has for several years had a Zero Waste government policy which spurred substantial efforts at recycling. Even concrete from demolished buildings is re-used.

New Zealand's Waste Minimisation Act 2008 directs stewardship schemes that collect and recycle products instead of sending them to landfills. Its community recycling groups have proven that re-using materials in manufacturing rather than simply dumping them creates jobs and generates money flowing through local businesses. More than 40 community enterprises throughout the country are involved in waste reduction and resource recovery. Raglan's Xtreme Waste Company, for example, diverts 64 percent of waste from landfill. Being the beautiful nation that it is, recycling helps keep it scenic.

It's amazing what can be manufactured from recycled materials. Most of us may be familiar with the relatively comfortable, sturdy, green benches that are manufactured from recycled milk jugs and provide a needed place to rest for children on their school grounds or parents at city parks. The City's annual recycling fair turned up some cool surprises—pencils made of

spiraled recycled newspaper, plastic document holders, shoe strings and other things kids need. Many of us have admired the beautiful textured stationery that can be produced from recycled paper.

If you want to see the potential for products, check out Ohio's Weisenbach company website, recycledproducts.com. You'll see clothing and accessories such as jackets, mufflers, hats, caps, aprons, fleece vests, wristbands, shoelaces, drawing backpacks, portfolio brief cases, tote bags, duffel bags and purses.

Weisenbach also offers personal items such as blankets, bottle holders, eye glass retainers, dog tags, photo frames, key chains, key tags, zipper pulls, lapel pins, badge holders, golf tees, piggy banks, welcome mats and slinkys. Office and school supplies can be produced from recycled plastic and other materials including rulers, pencils, binders, pens, highlighters, notebooks, pencil boxes, pencil sharpeners, post-its, scratch paper, journals, planners, binders, soy bean crayons, bookmarks, letter openers, clipboards, desk-togo, boxes, memo pad holders, business card holders, business cards, calendars, sticky notepads, paperweights, mouse pads, memo boards, pocket folders, note cards and envelopes.

Recycled metal and plastic can be turned into mugs, thermal canisters, steel or aluminum water bottles, bottle openers, can openers, can

crushers, coasters, food containers, food canisters, cups, plates, soup mugs and jar openers. Other useful items include light switch plates, license plates, luggage tags, picker-uppers, oil filter wrenches, screwdrivers, paper shopping bags, and corrugated boxes.

Think of the jobs involved in manufacturing, stocking, and selling all of these items. Recycling can be great for the economy.

Amazing Products of Colorado, another manufacturer that uses recycled materials, produces attractive, durable picnic tables, benches, parking blocks, plastic timber, trash receptacles and a number of other useful items.

Then there's food waste, which according to the Environmental Protection Agency, accounts for about 13 percent of total trash nationally. San Francisco and Seattle have adopted plans for zero-waste practices and are collecting organic waste curbside for composting. This allows food waste to return nutrients to the soil and prevents methane that is produced when food decomposes in landfills. The Georgia Restaurant Association has created zero-waste zones for its restaurants. Restaurants scrape uneaten food into bins that are hauled to composting facilities.

Biodegradable packaging also helps extend landfill life because the packaging will naturally degrade. The Hawaii State Senate previously considered legislation to ban Styro-

foam so that old-time agricultural businesses on the neighbor islands would have the volume to make it financially feasible for them to invest in local production of the feedstock for biodegradable food containers, utensils, plates, and bowls. The legislation has not passed to date.

Europe offers another avenue for using greenwaste. Over 100 facilities scattered throughout Europe process biowaste in anaerobic digesters, then compress the gas and place it in gas pipelines for home cooking and water heating or for use in methane-fueled cars. Biogas from processed waste sludge or biological waste is sent to more than 2,000 filling stations throughout the continent to provide alternative fuel for bi-fuel cars. These autos run on methane with regular liquid gas as back-up.

Volvo, which has sold more than 12,000 of these cars since 2001, says bi-fuel cars offer lower running costs. Carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to global warming are about 25 percent lower for methane power. Italy has more than 400,000 of these methane-powered vehicles.

Given the economic and environmental benefits of recycling, not to mention preserving valuable space on our limited landscape, I hope small businesses will meet the NIMBY challenge to create jobs and diversify Hawaii's product offerings that can be sold here and elsewhere.

The landfill issue is a harsh reality here in land-scarce Hawaii. Nobody wants a landfill sited near their neighborhood and few people want to see their property taxes raised to have it shipped abroad either. Other jurisdictions facing the same problem have come up with solutions that might help Hawaii. Let's look at what some of these are.

Nantucket, Massachusetts, an island community, already faced the issue of running out of landfill space. Residents chose a strict trash policy rather than pay higher taxes and tax increases to pay for the cost of shipping trash elsewhere. The town mandated recycling of a wide range of items including aluminum, glass, paper, tires, batteries and household appliances.

The amount of trash remained steady but the proportion going into the landfill dropped to 8 percent. Fellow Massachusetts residents, in contrast, send 66 percent of their trash to the landfill or incinerator.

Recycling can be a boon to manufacturing. The cost of recycled materials can be much



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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IMMIGRATION GUIDE



By Atty. Emmanuel
Samonte Tipon

Tiger Woods, Car Accident, Domestic Violence, and Deportation

There are rumors that Tiger was having an affair and that he was quarrelling with his wife who hit him with a golf club without shouting "fore" and he fled the house. These rumors have been denied.

The police are miffed because Tiger does not want to give a statement. But only lions roar, not tigers.

No Talk, No Mistake

The motto "no talk, no mistake," was popularized by then senatorial candidate Gene Magaysay, the brother of the late President Ramon Magaysay. When he was asked by reporters why he refused to discuss the issues, he riposted "No talk, no mistake. Less talk, less mistake." He won easily. Many criminal suspects do not follow that rule. They lose terribly.

So why force Tiger to talk if he is not obliged to and does not want to. He must have been advised by his lawyer not to talk. That is excellent advice. Most criminal defendants are convicted because they talked and talked. It is a malady called "loquaciousness".

The "Miranda rule" requires the police to warn a per-

son in custody: "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say may be used against you."

A rising Hawaii Filipino politician's career came to an abrupt end after he was stopped by police and asked if he was drinking. He admitted that he had but that it was only two glasses of wine. He tried to talk his way out of it, saying he lost his contact lenses that is why he was driving erratically. He was charged with driving under the influence of liquor and endangering the life of his minor child who was with him. He pleaded guilty and spent a couple of nights in jail. Now, if he had not talked at all, would the police have had the evidence to charge and convict him?

My son Noel and I discussed this issue this morning on our radio show "Noel Tipon and the Law". He is a former Major in the Marine Corps and served in Iraq. He is a criminal defense attorney. He fully subscribes to the motto "no talk, no mistake" for criminal defendants. Let your lawyer do the talking. Talk only when your lawyer says so.

Domestic violence and

Deportation

There is speculation that immigration authorities want to investigate Tiger's beautiful alien wife. They want to find out if he hit Tiger with a golf club. That would be "domestic violence," which is a ground for deportation, so they say. Why, is she not a U.S. citizen yet?

Sec. 237(a)(2)(E)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act provides: "Any alien who at any time after entry is convicted of a crime of domestic violence" is deportable.

The Act provides that "the term 'crime of domestic violence' means any crime of violence (as defined in section 16 of title 18, United States Code) against a person committed by, among others, a current spouse of the person.

Section 16 of Title 18 provides that "The term 'crime of violence' means—

(a) an offense that has as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another, or

(b) any other offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may

be used in the course of committing the offense."

Of course, if Elin hires an excellent lawyer, the lawyer will likely advise her not to talk.

How will the police know if she hit Tiger with a golf club or not, unless she tells them or unless Tiger tells them. But even if she hit Tiger with a golf club, she could claim self-defense or that she is a battered spouse or has been subjected to extreme cruelty and invoke the waiver clause under Section 237(a)(7)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act which gives the Attorney General the discretion to waive deportation in such cases.

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Laogang 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. Office at 905 Uni St. corner N. King, Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96819. Tel. (808) 847 1601. Fax (808) 847 1624. E-Mail: filam-law@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.)

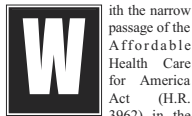
Tiger Woods was leaving his Florida home at around 2:30 in the morning on the day after Thanksgiving when his Cadillac Escalade SUV hit a fire hydrant and a tree near his home. He suffered lacerations on his face. His Swedish-born wife Elin was the first to rush to his assistance, hitting the glass windows of the car with a golf club to rescue him. He was treated at a hospital and then released within hours.

He gave his driver's license, car registration, and car insurance to the police. This is all that is required under their law. He is not required to make a statement to the police. That is what the police spokesman said.

But the media and the police want to make a big thing out of this. Tiger Woods is headline news - more important than health care, increasing unemployment, and Afghanistan.

What the Affordable Health Care for America Act Means for All of Us

By Pearl Hahn



With the narrow passage of the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962) in the U.S. House of Representatives, it is up to the Senate to decide whether to approve major government expansion into our lives. Unfortunately, the bill is a thinly veiled, revised version of H.R. 3200 which sparked a storm of controversy earlier this year over its costs and projected devastating effects on the economy and private health insurers.

There's no need to look beyond our own islands to see how badly the central elements of the bill will play out on a national scale. In addition to an individ-

ual mandate forcing Americans to purchase insurance, employers will be required to provide coverage for employees or else pay a hefty penalty. Hawaii has been widely lauded as a state in which the employer mandate has effectively insured a high percentage of citizens, yet its myriad hidden costs are rarely brought to light.

Since 1974, Hawaii has implemented the Prepaid Health Care Act (PHCA), which requires that employers provide employees working 20 or more hours a week with insurance, and stipulates that any plan offered by insurers provide equal or better benefits offered by the leading plan (with the most subscribers) in the state.

While Hawaii's uninsured rate is among the lowest in the nation, this cannot be attributed

to the employer mandate in PHCA. From the 1980s, the uninsured rate nearly doubled from a low of 5 percent to approximately 9.6 percent today. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hawaii's current uninsured rate is not statistically different from those of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Maine—none of which implement an employer mandate.

Hawaii also suffers from a lack of competition among insurers and abysmally low physician reimbursement levels. The state Blue Cross Blue Shield, or Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA), dominates nearly 70 percent of the insurance market, a monopoly protected by the second directive of PHCA. HMSA's market share increases to 85 percent for the more popular PPOs. Consequently, an estimated 90 percent of Hawaii doctors participate in HMSA

networks, as opting out would be the equivalent of unemployment.

The Hawaii Medical Association, an organization of physicians, recently sued HMSA due to unfair reimbursement practices. Despite reaching a \$128 million settlement in 2007, doctors are still leaving the islands in droves. Kauai, Molokai and the Big Island have no neurosurgeon. In Honolulu, only two orthopedic surgeons are on-call. The only acute care hospital on Maui, run by the state no less, has come under fire for poor fis-

cal management and dangerous conditions.

Hawaii's critical doctor shortage and lack of health coverage choices for state residents render its health care system anything but ideal. While we may be 5,000 miles from Washington, it's not far enough to escape the taxes, penalties and unemployment that will skyrocket from harmful policy.

(PEARL HAHN is a policy analyst for the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii. Reach her at pearl@grassrootinstitute.org.)

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SOCIETY PAGE



▲ Drs. Celia and Fernando Ona dancing the night away during a PMAH dinner reception



▲ Drs. Joseph and Fritz Zobian honing their dancing skills during a Halloween dinner party



◀ The Dancing Nurses (L-R) Perla Mendoza, Vangie Andres, Dolores de Guzman and Mila Beltran



▲ (L-R) Sen. Robert Bunda, Rep. Michael Magaoay, Dr. Elizabeth Abinsay and Sen. Will Espero



▲ Nurses who recently passed the Nurses Board Exams (L-R) Brenda Carioso, Josie Bautista, Jay R Langcay and Tessie Factora



(L-R) Virgil and Elvira Gabriel together with Ruby Del Carmen and Dr. Renato "Nats" Del Carmen visiting the island from the mainland ▶



▲ Rodolfo Sonido (middle checkered shirt) with his grandchildren during a family gathering in Waipahu



(L-R) Councilmember Romy Cachola, Lea Salonga, Dr. Erlinda Cachola and Consul General Leoncio Cardenas ▶



▲ Medical Preceptees taking a break from the Hawaii Preceptorship Training Program (Standing L-R) Dean Aguilung, Charilmagne Aguinaldo, Jose Leonard Sioco, Nestor Herana, Marco Valencia, Dods Simangan (Seating L-R) Markus Agito, Katrina Abadilla, Ria Valencia, Joanna Paras and Iandine Paras

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Cabral Named as Sales Manager for HTH Corp

HTH Corporation, a leader in Hawaii's hospitality industry operating the Pacific Beach Hotel and the Pagoda Hotel, has named Nicole Cabral as sales manager for the domestic and international markets for both hotels.

A graduate of Kamehameha Schools and Hawaii Pacific University, Cabral

has worked in the marketing and promotions industry for five years. Her most recent position was promotions manager of Partymaster Hawaii, Inc. She was also the membership and marketing director of the Mililani YMCA.

"Nicole's experience in both promotions and marketing strengthens our sales

team and provides fresh new skills to our marketing efforts," says Robert M. Minicola, regional vice president for HTH Corp.

While a student at HPU, Cabral was a member of the Travel Industry Management Club, International Association of Business Communicators and Akamai Advertising. She earned a scholarship at HPU through the Miss Hawaii Scholarship Organization

and is a former Miss Island Iliima and Miss Kahala.

Cabral spends her free time volunteering at various organizations such as Prevent Child Abuse Hawaii and the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Hawaii. She is also the Founder and Director of the "Live to Give Organization."



Nicole Cabral

Tips For Charitable Giving During Holiday Season

During the Christmas season, consumers may notice an increase in the numbers of requests for charitable donations. While most are legitimate, unscrupulous individuals may attempt to take advantage of the generosity of others during the Holidays.

The State Department of the Attorney General is offering the following tips to the public should they decide to make a charitable donation:

- Check out the charity before donating. Charitable organizations are required by law to register with the Department of the Attorney General. A searchable public database is available online at: ag.hawaii.gov/charity.
- Be aware that many fake charities use names that are similar to those of legitimate charitable organizations.
- When approached in person for a donation, ask for identification and written information about the charity,

including a physical address and how your donation will be used.

- Don't give or send cash. For security and tax purposes, contribute by check or credit card.
- Never give out personal information such as credit card or bank account numbers over the phone. Doing so may open the door to identity theft.
- Confirm that your donation is tax-deductible. The IRS publishes a list of organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. The list is available online at: www.irs.gov/app/pub-78.
- Don't be pressured into making a donation. Legitimate organizations will be happy to answer questions and provide the information you need to make an informed donation.

For more information, please contact Hugh R. Jones, supervising deputy attorney general, at 586-1473 or via email at: hugh.r.jones@hawaii.gov.

Christmas Events at Public Libraries

Several Christmas events will be offered at select public libraries for the month of December.

On December 5 at 11:30 am, the Heavenly Handbells and the Halle Halle Ringers bell choirs from Harris United Methodist Church will perform in concert at the Hawaii State Library. Both choirs will play special Christmas music using English handbells and chimes. There will also be lucky drawings for Christmas music CDs.

On December 12 at 10:30 am, puppeteer Christy Lipps will hold a special "Holiday Season Puppet Times" in the Edna Allyn Children's Room at the State Library. Favorite children's Christmas stories will be presented in a lively puppet show with music and songs. An hour later

at 11:30 am, the Lutheran Church of Honolulu Choir and Compline Choir will perform in concert in the front lobby. Conducted by Carl Crosier, Allen Bauchle and Keane Ishii, both choirs will perform Christmas carols and songs of the season.

On Tuesday, December 15 at 6 pm, the Ewa Beach Public & School Library will offer a hands-on demonstration entitled "Learn How to Make Christmas Crafts." Volunteers from the Oahu Association for Family and Community Education will conduct the hour-long presentation that includes demonstrations on making simple and economical gifts, decorations and some Christmas food ideas.

For more details or if a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations are needed for these events, please call 831-6877.

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FAMILY CORNER



By Grace Fong, Ed.D. and Sylvia Yuen, Ph.D.

The Gifts of Love and Time

The holiday season is here, and it is such a wondrous time of year for children! It's a time of wishes, surprises, giving, and receiving! The memories created at this time each year are some of the fondest memories made. For very young children, the best gifts of all are the gifts of your love and time. During this very hectic season, schedule some time each week to play, create, and have fun with your children. Activities do not need to be elaborate or expensive to be fun and educational—spend some time looking at holiday displays around town or in your neighborhood, make arts and crafts projects, bake cookies, make a gingerbread house, play board games, or read together. The time you spend together will mean more than expensive toys and the memories will last longer!

As you start preparing for the many holiday events and shopping for the seemingly endless gifts, take some time to remind your children (and yourself) to be thankful for what you have. To get started, you might set aside a special, quiet night to sit down with your family and

discuss all of the things there are to be thankful for. Encourage your children to think beyond material items. For example, you can start by saying to each of your children "I am so thankful that you are my child" or "I am thankful that we have food on our table." This is also a wonderful time to remind each other of what is important to your family. Take some time to talk about how important it is to show each person in your family respect and support, and to care for others as well.

While talking to your children about being thankful, take the opportunity to talk about those who have less than your family does. Discuss why it's important to think and care about others. Teaching young children to have concern and compassion for others helps them grow up to become responsible citizens in their community—citizens who work to make their community better. Children learn about kindness and compassion by the way they are treated from the time they are born. When you and other family members provide your children with loving care, they learn to treat others the same way.

While these are lessons you



can share all year round, the holiday season is an especially significant time to teach children about what it means to be a part of a family and a community. When you give them continuous and unconditional love every day, you teach your children to love themselves and to care for and about others. When you give your children the gifts of your love and time, you give them gifts that are priceless.

(from page 5, Pasko...)

minder of the very reason why we observe Christmas," says Maggie Domingo, chair of the Philippine Celebrations Coordinating Committee of Hawaii (PCCCH). "It teaches us the virtues of sacrifice, humility, and unconditional love. Let us not forget that Christmas is about the lessons-filled birth of the baby Jesus."

The re-enactment will be jointly presented by the PCCCH and students from Radford High School. The dialogues will also be interspersed with Filipino Christmas songs performed by the consular staff of the Philippine Consulate.

The event will culminate with a Simbang Gabi, literally meaning "mass at night." Philippine society, being heavily Roman Catholic (over 80 percent of its population), has made Simbang Gabi and the "dawn mass" an important Christmas celebration.

MAKE YOUR OWN HOLIDAY WRAPPING PAPER

Materials:

- A brown paper grocery bag
- Water-based tempera paint, washable markers, or jumbo crayons
- Scissors (for adult use only)

What to do:

1. Cut open a brown paper grocery bag to decorate the inside.
2. Cover your child's palm with water-based tempera and help her "stamp" her handprint all over the brown paper. Ask her what happens when she puts her palm on the paper.
3. Use different colors. You can wash off the paint before changing to another color or leave it on to see what happens when two colors combine.
4. Ask your child how the paint feels. For example, "Does the paint feel cool?"
5. Cover your own palm with paint and add a few of your own handprints to the paper.
6. Talk with your child about what she sees on the wrapping paper you have made together. For example, count the number of fingers on each handprint, compare big and small handprints, name colors, or ask her to find prints that are the same color and ones that are different.

Variations:

1. Have your child place her hand on the paper and help her trace her handprint with the crayon or marker. Repeat over the entire paper.
2. Ask your child to use markers or crayons to make designs, such as squiggly lines, all over the paper.
3. If you have older children, let them create their own designs.

! SAFETY ALERT: Scissors should be used by adults and kept out of reach of young children. Toddlers do not yet have the coordination to use adult scissors. When your child gets older (three to four years old), use blunt child-sized scissors to let her practice cutting.

COVER STORY (CONT.)

Gifts and Giveaways

In addition to airfare prizes from the parol and tabletop Christmas tree contests, two other round-trip tickets to the Philippines will be given away, courtesy of Hawaiian Airlines. To be eligible, attendees must bring a canned food for the Hawaii Food Bank. Jolly old St. Nick, with his bag of gifts for young boys and girls, will also grace the Pasko sa Fil-Com.

KNDI Radio will resume live coverage of the event from 5:30 pm - 8 pm.

"It is our goal to spread the message of hope and love as we observe the Christmas season. We will interview the people attending the event and get from their messages along with this theme," says Amy Casamina Cabatu, who co-hosts the program with Larry Ordoñez.

"I am pleased to see our many Filipino groups coming together and working to provide a joyous Pasko for all to enjoy," says Dr. Patricia Brown, presi-

dent of the Filipino American Historical Society of Hawaii (FAHSOH). "At last year's event, it was heartwarming to see children enjoying the many games and adults enjoying the special entertainment and food. Thanks to our dedicated planners and workers, this year's Pasko sa Fil-Com will be just as memorable."

"The Pasko event is a must attend treat for everyone—Filipinos as well as non-Filipinos," says Abelina Madrid-Shaw, chair of the Fil-Com Center Board of Directors. "It is an opportunity to experience what Christmas is like in the Philippines."

For more information about this year's Pasko sa Fil-Com, please call 381-4315 or the Fil-Com Center at 680-0451.

RAYMUND LIONGSON, Ph.D. is professor of Philippine Studies at Leeward Community College and chair of the 2009 Pasko sa Fil-Com. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Fil-Com Center.

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LEGAL NOTES

Visa for Nurses to End Soon



By Reuben S. Seguritan

The H-1C program for Registered Nurses which started on September 21, 2000 is set to expire on December 20, 2009. There is no indication at this time that it will be extended.

The program was established pursuant to the Nursing Relief for Disadvantaged Areas Act of 1999 as a way to reduce shortage of nurses in health professional shortage areas. 500 visas are allotted each year which is in turn subject to a per state limit of up to

50 based on its population.

Because of this restrictive requirement, only 14 hospitals have been approved to file H-1C petitions. They are: Beaumont Regional Medical Center, Beaumont, TX.; Beverly Hospital, Montebello, CA.; Doctors Medical Center, Modesto, CA.; Elizabeth General Medical Center, Elizabeth, NJ.; Fairview Park Hospital, Dublin, GA.; Lutheran Medical Center, St. Louis, MO.; McAllen Medical Center, McAllen, TX.; Mercy Medical Center, Baltimore, MD.; Mercy Regional Medical Center, Laredo, TX.; Peninsula Hospital Center, Far Rockaway, NY.; Southeastern Regional Medical Center, Lumberton, NC.; Southwest General Hospital, San Antonio, TX.; St. Bernard Hospital, Chicago, IL.; and Val-

ley Baptist Medical Center, Harlingen, TX.

In order to be eligible to petition nurses for H-1C visa, a hospital has to be located in a professional health shortage area and must fulfill other requirements such as having a minimum of 190 acute care beds, having at least 35 % of patients covered by Medicare and at least 28% of the patients covered by Medicaid. A hospital must have been in a health professional shortage area on March 30, 1997.

H-1C nurses cannot constitute more than one-third of the hospital nursing staff and they cannot work in a location that is not under its control nor can they be transferred from one location to another.

Only hospitals are eligible to sponsor H-1C nurses. Nurs-

ing homes, clinics, health care agencies and skilled nursing facilities are excluded.

Because of the stringent requirements, only 532 nurses have entered the U.S. under the H-1C visa as reported in the 2008 USCIS Yearbook on Immigration Statistics. The annual breakdown is as follows: 2001 – 29; 2002 – 111; 2003 – 48; 2004 – 70; 2005 – 21; 2006-24; 2007 – 49; and 2008 -170.

There had been attempts in Congress to ease the stringent requirements and eliminate the numerical limitation such as the bills introduced by Senator Sam Brownback in 2001 and Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee in 2001 and 2003 but they died for lack of support.

There were also bills that were introduced to create another type of visa for nurses.

The Nursing Relief Act which sought to create a new W-1 visa was introduced by Rep. John Shadegg in 2006 but it did not go beyond the Judiciary Committee.

The Emergency Nursing Supply Relief Act which has been introduced every year in the last few years tried to address the shortage of nurses by increasing the number of employment-based immigrant visas for several years also failed to gather enough co-sponsors.

Hopefully, the proposed comprehensive immigration reform bill which includes more immigrant visas for nurses will pass sooner rather than later.

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 web-site at www.seguritan.com

PHILIPPINE NEWS

2 Pinoys Win Web Debates

By Evelyn Macairan / Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009

MANILA, Philippines — Two young Filipinos won the recent CNN/YouTube Debates and their prize includes a free trip to Copenhagen, Denmark to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

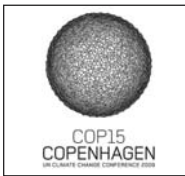
Paul Darwynn Garilao and Alfonso Orioste Jr., both graduates of De La Salle University (DLSU) in Manila, won the CNN contest a week after another Filipino, Efrén Peñaflorida, was hailed as the CNN Hero of the Year.

Garilao and Orioste will be part of the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) and attend the live debate sponsored by CNN and YouTube.

CNN news anchor Becky Anderson will host the live debate that would include leaders from 193 countries.

Out of 600 entries, another entry, Global Warming Project from Brazil, also made the cut. The online voting took place between Nov. 6 and 30.

"Once again, we have proven the bayanihan spirit online. Filipino consumers – wherever they are – massively voted for our video. Based on our count, more than 600 Facebook users linked the video and shared steps on how to vote. At least 12 bloggers also campaigned for the



video and shared their thoughts on climate change," Garilao said.

The organizations and networks that supported Peñaflorida were also the same groups who campaigned for their video. Definitely Filipino, an online organization with almost 400,000 Facebook members, was hailed as the most advocacies by gathering online votes.

DLSU president Brother Armin Luistro FSC, who is a passionate environmental advocate, had endorsed their video.

Students of the University of Santo Thomas (UST) recently watched the video during an environmental seminar in the school.

The six-minute amateur documentary discussed disaster management and the drive to shift to alternative energy.

They were motivated to join the contest after seeing the effects of typhoons "Ondoy" and "Pepeyng."

Through this online campaign, the young Pinoys jump-started discussions that will

serve as a springboard to raise awareness on climate change.

"We have to beat the climate change buzzer. The Philippines is currently the centerfold of climate change discussions because of the super typhoons that recently devastated us. Serving as the Filipino voice in Copenhagen, we will convince global leaders to include discussions on disaster preparedness programs. This will benefit not only the Philippines but also other countries prone to natural disasters," said Garilao, a Filipino engineer and freelance journalist based in Hawaii.

Orioste, now a freshman law student at San Beda College, said: "There should be a stakeholder approach in dealing with disaster preparedness. Instead of becoming reactive, the government should be proactive. A close and efficient coordination with different sectors – both public and private – during calamities will help reduce the impacts of severe typhoons. We should take a leap in mobilizing not just relief efforts but also alarm systems before a natural disaster strikes."

The two Filipino winners also asked world leaders to discuss ways to reduce carbon emissions that adversely affect the environment.

"The best step is to shift to using clean energy if countries want to reduce their emissions.

This is a difficult transition but it is the best step to combat climate change. Samples of clean energy resources include solar panel, wind turbine, and biogas."

The World Research Institute said the cumulative carbon dioxide emissions of the United States reached 29.3 percent, while the Philippines only accumulated 0.03 percent.

Garilao and Orioste also called on those running for local and national positions to prioritize climate change in their platforms. They would be sharing their key learning experiences with government officials, envi-

ronmental organizations, and the private sector.

They also encouraged film aficionados to produce user-generated videos that would raise awareness on climate change. A few days before the online voting ended, three video makers from the Philippines also participated.

The COP15 channel said that those who want to raise their voices to the world leaders can still be part of the live debate by uploading their comments and questions about climate change. Submission is open until Dec. 14. (www.philstar.com)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Senators, Bishops Slam GMA Bid

By Aurea Calica /
Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009

MANILA, Philippines - Senators and prominent Roman Catholic bishops said President Arroyo's decision to run for congresswoman in Pampanga has shown her desperation for political survival.

The senators and the clergy said the move showed Mrs. Arroyo's lack of sense of propriety and her insatiable lust for power.

"She's setting a bad precedent - hanging on to presidential post and use of presidential power and funds to crush any congressional opponent," Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said.

"She's making political playing field uneven versus all democratic demands for fairness," Pimentel said.

Sen. Francis Escudero said that while it was Mrs. Arroyo's right to seek a lower public office, "it surely leaves a bad taste in the mouth."

"What else does she need to prove and accomplish? Perhaps that's her exit plan to ensure protection," Escudero said.

Mrs. Arroyo's critics believe a congressional seat would pave the way for her bagging the speakership and eventually

give her the clout to initiate a shift to a parliamentary form of government with herself as prime minister.

Sen. Manuel Villar, standard bearer of the Nacionalista Party, said it would be up to the people to judge Mrs. Arroyo based on how she has performed in her nine years in office.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said he was not surprised that Mrs. Arroyo would be ready to sacrifice propriety for political survival.

"I recall Senator Joker Arroyo saying that her running for Congress would be demeaning but (for President Arroyo) nothing is demeaning when it comes to political survival," Pangilinan said.

"Running for public office as a means to protect one's personal interests has been done countless of times in the past by many other politicians," he said.

"Since the Hello Garci controversy, President Arroyo's sole focus has been political survival that has pushed her to seek a congressional seat," he said.

"For President Arroyo, it is better to be in office than out of it because the office and the powers that come with it will be used as vehicle to protect her-



President Gloria Arroyo shows her certificate of candidacy

self," he added.

"This has little to do with public service and has more to do with protecting one's back from the threat of political persecution. She is desperately looking for a soft landing after 2010," he said.

"She will win, yes and she will try her best to use the office to protect herself. I doubt very much though if she will succeed in finding a way out, in achieving the soft landing she desires," he said.

"In the final analysis, it is said that history can be a cruel judge and she cannot escape the judgment of history, none of us can," Pangilinan said.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II, for his part, rebuffed Mrs. Arroyo's claim that her desire to serve the public was her motivation for seeking a lower post after the

end of her term.

"It's intriguing that after nine years in office she claims to have not done enough. Maybe she has motives for running again but serving the people definitely is not one of them," Roxas said in Filipino. Roxas, Liberal Party candidate for vice president, was in Pampanga yesterday with Sen. Benigno Aquino III, the party's standard bearer.

Nevertheless, Roxas said he is confident voters in Pampanga are also seeking genuine reforms as shown by the swearing in today of 63 local officials and prospective candidates, into the LP.

"Now we see that Gloria's supposed bailiwick is also a bailiwick of hope. Here and in other parts of the country, we can hear the resounding call of all Filipinos (for real change)," Roxas said.

"Contrary to the claim of certain camps, Pampanga is owned by nobody but by Pampanueños who hunger and thirst for change. The Philip-

pinos is owned by nobody but Filipinos who want the status quo of traditional and transactional politics be overturned by transformational leadership," he said.

"It was unthinkable for us to see a sitting President to run as a congressman," NP spokesman Gilbert Remulla said.

"There will be questions to its legality for her to do without vacating her post. It is, however, unquestionable in its impropriety because it smacks of desperation to cling to power at all costs," Remulla said.

"Actually, on a personal note and as former member of Congress, all I can say is, this is going to be very dangerous for (the next) sitting president to become a member of Congress. With the so many resources that she got, she can ally with a big bloc of sitting congressmen and be a hindrance to a House Speaker in working for the impeachment of a sitting president," said Remulla. (www.philstar.com)

Overseas Pinoys Send Home More Money Due to Calamities

By Mayen Jaymalin /
Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009

(OFWs) to send more money to their families here for housing repairs and recovery spending.

MANILA, Philippines - Due to recent calamities that hit the country and the coming Holiday season, Filipino workers in Canada and other countries have sent home more money to their families back home.

The country's largest labor group yesterday reported that it has revised its previous projection of a drop in remittances from Filipino workers abroad.

"We are revising upward the expected remittances from OFWs, in view of stronger-than-expected inflows from Canada and Japan, as well as parts of Europe," said Trade Union Congress of the Philippines secretary-general and former Senator Ernesto Herrera.

Herrera noted that the recent natural disasters that hit the country have driven many overseas Filipino workers

He then estimated that the 2009 remittances from OFWs would grow by \$500 million to \$1 billion from last year's figure of \$1.6426 billion.

TUCP previously projected a five to 10-percent drop in remittances this year mainly due to the lingering economic slump in the US, which is the country's largest source of foreign inflows from migrant workers.

Of the \$1.6426 billion wired home by all OFWs from all parts of the globe in 2008, 48 percent or \$7.825 billion came from those.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, OFWs sent home through banks a total of \$12.789 billion in the first nine months of the year, up \$516.62 million or 4.21 percent from the \$12.273 billion they remitted during the same period in 2008. (www.philstar.com)



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MAINLAND NEWS

APAICS Announces 2010 Summer Internship Program

This year's host was the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) is accepting applications for its 2010 undergraduate Summer Internship Program starting in December 2009. Application forms can be downloaded online at: www.apaics.org and must be submitted by January 31, 2010.

The APAICS Summer Internship Program encourages

the political and civic involvement of undergraduate Asian Pacific American students, fosters their interest in careers in politics and public policy and develops their leadership skills.

Summer interns will receive a stipend and start their internship from June 7 to July 31, 2010. Interns are selected from applicants nationwide and reflect the ethnic diversity of the Asian-Pacific American

community. Applicants must demonstrate an interest in public service and Asian-Pacific American affairs.

Founded in 1994, APAICS is a national non-profit, non-partisan, educational organization based in Washington, D.C., that seeks to build a politically-empowered Asian Pacific American (APA) community, to fill the political pipeline for APAs to enter and advance into elected office and to be a resource to Congress about the APA community.

Pinay Runner Completes Trans-USA Journey

It wasn't easy but Filipina runner Joy Rojas completed her trans-continental run from Los Angeles to New York City.

Rojas began her trek in April 2009 at the Eagle Rock Plaza in Los Angeles and arrived at the Philippine Consulate in New York City seven months later on November 22. She was scheduled to complete her run by September 8 but suffered a pelvic stress fracture during the middle of her journey. Despite the injury, she managed to log between 25 to

30 miles a day.

"The last month and a half was difficult," Rojas says. "We only had one rest day because we were trying to complete the run by Thanksgiving and before the snow started coming. Now, I just want to rest. I demanded so much from my body."

In all, her run covered 3,000 miles and took her across 12 states and four different time zones. She holds the distinction of being the first Filipina and first Southeast Asian woman to run across the U.S.

In each state she crossed, Rojas encountered Filipinos who welcomed her and trainer Mat Macabe. There was a Filipino in

Trans-USA

Colorado who cooked them a venison meal and strangers who offered water as the two of them ran across the Midwest. Fil-Ams in Kansas City and Washington, DC also welcomed and encouraged them along the way.

"For me, this run was a big part of my life," she says.

A survivor of tuberculosis, Rojas will donate proceeds from her cross-continental run to two Philippine-based charities: the Anti-Tuberculosis Program of the Inner Wheel Club of Quezon City District 738 and the Social Services Division of the Philippine Heart Center. She will also write a book about her Trans USA run. (*AsianJournal.com*)

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