

Ethnic Press holds 2nd professional seminars

By Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

Markham, ON - December 8, 2013 - About 260 members of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada attended the 2nd professional development seminar that was held from December 6 to 8, 2013 at Seneca College. The first one was held three years ago, November 20-22, 2009, also held at Seneca College which provided most of the speakers and lecturers for the seminars. This seminar was made possible through the Government of Canada's Canadian Periodical Fund under the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The opening plenary session was presided by the "Networking Guru.", Donna Messer, who gave an excellent motivational lecture on "Effectuve Business Networking", in an inter-active fashion that drew repeated applauses from the audience. Her main theme was the three C's of Networking - collaborate, commit, and



Some of the participants in the seminars: from left: Helen Wang, Ned Blair, NEPMCC vice-president, Business Development, Zenaida Kharroubi, Kostas Karatsikis, Mario Ayala, and Maria Ayala. Photo taken before departing for the airport, December 8, 2013.

communicate. There were many interesting topics discussed by each speaker/lecturer in different fields of expertise that fulfilled the objectives of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada. to provide professional skills and competence for its members. Besides giving recognition to the importance of the ethnic media as Canada's "other voices", it was also a great opportunity to do networking. Among the most relevant topic discussed is the role of the ethnic media - why local news matters - delivered by Ms. April Lindgren, Canadian Ethnic Community Media Specialist, an associate professor in the School of Journalism at Ryerson University. She pointed out that local news coverage represents an important competitive advantage for

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Remembering Nelson Mandela Lessons for us all

A remarkable man, a remarkable legacy

Irwin Cotler on the lessons we must learn from Mandela

by Irwin Cotler on Friday, December 6, 2013 9:42pm

It is regrettably a rare occasion when members of Canada's political parties join together in solidarity. As such, when I added my voice to those of Stephen Harper, Thomas Mulcair, and Elizabeth May as the entire House of Commons paid tribute to Nelson Mandela in the hours after his death, it was yet another manifestation of Mandela's great capacity to unite.

My involvement in Mandela's case and cause began when I visited South Africa in 1981 as a guest of the anti-apartheid movement. I met with, among others, faculty and student organizations, leaders of the Black Sash women's anti-apartheid group, and members of Mandela's legal team, including Issie Meisels, his Senior Counsel, George Bizos, and Arthur Chaskelson, then his junior counsel. Chaskelson would go on to become president of South Africa's first constitutional court.

At the time, I was also serving as counsel to imprisoned Soviet dissident Anatoly Sharansky, and the South African Union of Students asked me to speak at the University of the

Witwatersrand in Johannesburg on the topic of "If Sharansky, Why Not Mandela?" For the South African government, Sharansky was a hero in the fight against communism, whereas Mandela was a communist - and terrorist - to be fought against. In fact, Canada also considered Mandela a terrorist at the time.

I was arrested moments after I spoke, because the mere mention of Mandela's name was a punishable offence in South Africa. While detained, I was summoned to a meeting with Pik Botha, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs (not to be confused with Prime Minister P.W.

See Page 4 Mandela



Nelson Mandela
July 18, 1918-December 5, 2013

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Editorial

The greatest tribute to Nelson Mandela is the emulation of his ideas

If all the great speeches of the world leaders during the funeral service of Nelson Mandela were not only in words but also in deeds, we would achieve not only peace and unity but also the elimination of poverty and war. Let us therefore make it a point to remember quotes from his life and see how they can be applied into our own daily life.

Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison, and yet he was willing to forgive his jailers. He said that if he did not forgive them, he would seem to be still in prison. If the common man, who has been wronged in some way, understood that "resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies" we may all enjoy happier and healthier lives.

Mandela also said: "What globalization means, as it so often does, that the rich and powerful now have new means to further enrich and empower themselves at the cost of the poorer and weaker, we have a responsibility to protest in the name of universal freedom." How many of us get involved in joining a movement to change things that need to be changed? For example, do we ever take the time to write to our elected representatives to ask questions about a law that seems to be unfair? Another illustration of most people's apathy is the low voter turn out during elections. If participation in elections is not considered an important duty by more people, we do not really know the meaning of freedom and we do not seem to cherish the principles of democracy.

Mandela is admired for his humility as he believes that "A good

leader can engage in a debate frankly and thoroughly, knowing that at the end he and the other side must be closer, and thus emerge stronger. You don't have that idea when you are arrogant, superficial, and uninformed.

Another brainy quote from Mandela seems to give the common man an insight as to what is really important in life: "Money won't create success, the freedom to make it will." He seems to imply that material things are not as important as the intangibles which in essence are more powerful such as a person's motivation that drives one to do better and achieve his goals.

Discrimination, racism, is not only committed by one race over another but it seems that it can also be committed by all kinds of people from different racial groups. Mandela exemplifies great wisdom when he said: I detest racialism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black man or a white man."

If everyone without exception can learn to value time, perhaps, we can do greater things. Mandela appreciated time even though he was deprived from being free physically for 27 years for he managed to emerge from jail with self-knowledge that made him a great hero, the greatest son of South Africa ever born. He said: We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right." If all of us, leaders and followers alike, do not wait to do the right things, the way Mandela lived his life, this world will indeed be a great place ■

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi



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Who is being negative, Aquino or the media?

December 10, 2013 | Opinion
ON DISTANT SHORE
By Val G. Abelgas

?Like a spoiled child who didn't get what he wanted, President Aquino ranted again against the media, accusing newsmen of "too much negativism," particularly in their coverage of super typhoon Yolanda and the fighting in Zamboanga City.

"So often, when we read the newspaper, listen to the radio or watch TV, we still get a sense of too much negativism. It's like if we don't create controversy, our media are boring," a visibly irked Aquino told members of the press at the Christmas party of the Bulong Pulungan forum at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza in Pasay City.

Aquino made the remarks a few weeks after his approval rating dropped 15 points in a recent public opinion survey. "At the end of the day, the only criteria I have is: Did I do right? And sometimes the right decision may be unpopular. Sometimes, conversely, the wrong decision is immensely popular," he said.

"Our people, I believe, are fair judges... I expect that the numbers will rebound, [but] in case they do go down, that is not the important thing," he added. "Will our people see me as doing that which is right? That is what is important to me."

But that precisely is what is wrong with his frequent rants against the media. He said he is not bothered by the continuous decline of his approval rating, and yet every time it suffers a drop, he blames the media. He says he believes the people are fair judges, and yet when the people decides he is not doing his job well, he rants and blames the media.

As early as January 2011, only six months into the presidency, Aquino criticized media's alleged "propensity

to focus on the negative issues instead of the positive ones." At that time, Aquino was being criticized for his purchase of a Porsche and the use of an armored Lexus, which he claimed was loaned to him by his brother-in-law.

Aquino said some media personnel might just be turning a blind eye on positive developments under his administration. "Mahirap ipakita sa nagbubulagbulagan, at ipadinig sa nagbibingbinghan. Basta kami magtatrabaho na lang."

Two weeks earlier, in a speech before the Filipino community in Jakarta, Aquino also took a swipe at media for "reporting negative news about the country instead of looking at its brighter side."

So when the Social Weather Station reported that Aquino's satisfaction rating had dipped 13 points, did you expect presidential deputy spokesperson Abigail Valte to say the poll result has only inspired the President to focus even more on the tasks at hand? No, she blamed the media and hinted that advertisers should boycott publications that are printing negative stories about the President.

Aquino was visibly irritated by media's coverage of the devastation caused by typhoon Yolanda in Leyte, Samar and other areas in the Visayas. Did he want the media to ignore the hundreds of bodies that lay unattended on Leyte's streets? Did he want media to say government is responding very quickly to the needs of the typhoon survivors, when relief came only three days after the disaster? Did he want media to ignore the chaos that have resulted from the disorganized relief and recovery operations?

See Page 11	Aquino
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From Page 1

Mandela

Botha). Botha had a picture of Sharansky on his office wall, and he spent over three hours trying to convince me that the causes of Mandela and Sharansky were incompatible, and that South Africa was in fact a democratic pluralist society where black and white citizens were separate but equal. He was not impressed by my argument that both men were fighting for freedom, human rights, and human dignity, but because of the esteem in which he held Sharansky, he encouraged me to tour the country and see the true nature of apartheid for myself.

I did just that before meeting with Botha again at the end of my trip. When he asked for my impressions, I agreed that the country was indeed a plural democracy – but only for white South Africans. For black citizens, I told Botha it was worse than I had thought. South Africa was the only post-World War II country that had institutionalized racism as a matter of law, and I would oppose this racist regime from wherever I was for as long as it was necessary.

Accordingly, when I was asked by Mandela's lawyers to be his Canadian counsel – and to advocate for him as I had been doing for Sharansky – I was pleased to accept.

Upon my return to Canada, I participated in the public launch of a major anti-apartheid initiative. Some of the Canadian organizations involved were reluctant to reference Mandela lest his supposed associations with terrorism tarnish the cause, but I believed then as now that his personal struggle was inextricably linked to the broader fight against racism and inequality.

Unexpectedly, the links between Mandela's struggle and that of Sharansky continued as well. As counsel to both, I was asked by the South African government to help arrange a deal whereby it would release Mandela if the USSR would free Sharansky and his fellow dissident Andrei Sakharov. The Soviets declined, seeing in this a South African ploy to burnish their reputation. The South African government then sought to have me broker a new arrangement that would include the release of a Soviet general in South African custody. In the end, the general died in prison, and no agreement was reached.

In 2001, the House of Commons awarded Mandela honorary Canadian citizenship, and I was privileged to join in the debate. As I said then, Nelson Mandela is the metaphor and message of the struggle for human rights and human dignity in our time. The three great struggles of the 20th century – for freedom, equality, and democracy – are symbolized and anchored in his personal struggle in South Africa. He represents tolerance, healing, reconciliation, and education as a precondition for a culture of peace, and his emergence after 27 years in prison – not only to dismantle an unjust regime but to build and govern a renewed and unified nation – is the ultimate expression of hope and antidote to cynicism.

Last year, I returned to South Africa at an important moment in the country's history. It was both the 100th anniversary of Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), and the 15th anniversary of the South African constitution, which drew for inspiration on Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In addition to reuniting with anti-apartheid activists and fellow members of Mandela's legal team, I sought out Pik Botha and met with him again.

In the years since we last spoke, Botha had become the first South African cabinet minister to call for Mandela's

release, he served in Mandela's government from 1994 to 1996, and he remains a member of the ANC. Indeed, Mandela's greatest legacy may be his power to convert enemies into allies, building coalitions between diverse – even antagonistic – peoples, races, and identities, and giving expression to his vision of South Africa as a rainbow nation. He accomplished all this without rancour, anger or malice, but with a generosity of spirit and care that has inspired all in South Africa and beyond.

In the days since his passing, not only Canadian parliamentarians but people around the world have set aside their differences and united in recognition and celebration of this brilliant and beloved man. I join all those in South Africa and around the world who mourn the loss of Nelson Mandela, and who strive to learn the lessons of his remarkable life. May his memory continue to inspire us and be a blessing for us all.

Irwin Cotler is a Canadian Member of Parliament and former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada ■

This article can be found at <http://www2.macleans.ca/2013/12/06/a-remarkable-man-a-remarkable-legacy/>

The Globe and Mail

December 10, 2013

From Canada's delegation, Redford and Cotler reflect on deep connections to Mandela

By AFFAN CHOWDHRY AND KIM MACKRAEL

Nelson Mandela memorial moves members of Canada's official delegation to reflect on their personal connection with the man who delivered South Africa from apartheid

Just hours after Nelson Mandela's memorial – which drew tens of thousands of South Africans, along with world leaders and a global television audience in the millions – members of the official Canadian delegation reflected on being inside the soccer stadium and the man who delivered South Africa from apartheid.

"I never thought that his day would come. I never thought that I would have the opportunity to be here," said Alberta Premier Alison Redford during a conference call with reporters, her voice choked with emotion.

"I'm not sure that I would say that I enjoyed being here – for me it was a



A delegation of U.S. presidents, George Bush, Sr., Barack Obama, George Bush, and Bill Clinton at the memorial service for Nelson Mandela, December 15, 2013,

www.filipinostar.org

From Page 1

Ethnic Media

ethnic media and is also central to the role of these news media as community institutions. The participants learned how ethnic news outlets can adapt general news stories for their readers, viewers and listeners and receive suggestions for boosting local content.

Dr. Andrew Gekas, Associate Professor of Business Administration, Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management, delivered a lecture on the Cost-Benefit of Quality. He gave a lot of information on the cornerstones



Barbara Caines, CBC TV and Radio anchor for 3 decades, poses with Zenaida Kharroubi after her lecture on professional writing and interview skills/best practices.

"It sounds banal to say that it was very moving, because I guess you would hear that from most people. But it was as much a celebration of his life as it was the mourning of his passing. It was very much a set of tributes from all those who spoke, and I think there was 100 countries that were represented today," Mr. Cotler said.

He said the Canadian delegation was warned before leaving the hotel Tuesday morning that there might be an administrative delay in getting accreditation for the ceremony but he said it wasn't an issue when the group arrived.

"In effect, the long walk to freedom is not over. It may be at this point that he's gone to his resting place, it's now the responsibility of South Africans individually and collectively to internalize his messages and his values and to build the kind of South Africa that he was aspiring for on their behalf," Mr. Cotler said.

Inside the stadium, Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski tweeted several 'selfies' - one1 with his fellow premiers and a second2 with four beaming former prime ministers and a governor general.

For Premier Redford, the South Africa trip has been filled with "flashbacks" from her time in the country – whether it is the development of the African National Congress as the country's main political force or Mr. Mandela's evolution as a leader who held the country together after the apartheid years.

It really struck me when I walked in [to the stadium] because that was a place where I've been to other political meetings before – and to walk in there, to know that he wasn't going to get up on that stage was really hard. I was surprised how sad it made me," she said.

"Mr. Mandela's body will lie in state for three days in the capital Pretoria beginning Wednesday. On Sunday, he will be buried in his ancestral village of Qunu.

of quality consisting of the 3 Cs - Commitment (unwavering, not casual), Competence (expert know how) and Communication (common understanding between sender and receiver.) A quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson sums up the idea of being committed to producing quality service or product: "The reward of a job well done is to have done it."

The richness and variety of topics discussed by different speakers who are practitioners and academics, have made this seminar a rewarding and worthwhile experience. Ms. Barbara Caines, a Senior Canadian Broadcast Journalist and Media Leader, gave a lecture on professional writing and interview skills and best practices. Dr. Ralph Izzard, Professor Emeritus, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University, Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University, discussed the fundamentals of news reporting. Ms. Paula Todd, Lawyer, leading National Author and Journalist, Advocate for Justice, Professor at School of Media and Marketing at Seneca College, underscored the importance of objectivity, accuracy, and transparency in reporting whether it is digital, broadcast, or print. Hamza Khan, Digital Strategist, Entrepreneur, Media Business Success Guru, Professor at Seneca College and University of Toronto and Ryerson University, focused on the 360-Degree Digital Marketing Strategies for New Audiences. Ms. Robin Potter, Professor at the School of English and Liberal Studies at Seneca College, showed how to use Wordpress.com to create responsive online blogs and websites. Byron Tobar, professor at Seneca College's School of International Business, gave many insightful suggestions on Translating Effective Business Strategy into Proactive Business Planning as well as Leveraging

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Ethnic Media



IMAGE & FASHION

Michael Davantes
B.A. Specialization in Communication

2XIST Campaign Model Eian Scully - Raising funds for the Victims of Typhoon Yolanda

As a Samareno, I am trying to help raise funds to rebuild the Visayas through several ways such as partnering with supermodel Eian Scully.

I discovered Eian at Mont Royal when he was only 17 years old. He was also raised by a Filipina so that he is familiar with Filipino culture. Filipinos are very dear to his heart. His

He had also worked with Madonna. As the campaign model for 2Xist, Eian is raising money by selling autographed 2Xist underwear with proceeds going to a rehabilitation initiative to rebuild the lives and livelihoods of fishing communities ravaged by Super Typhoon Yolanda. The objective is to build 10,000 fishing boats that will be distributed to



Eian Scully

fishermen who have lost their boats and are ready to resume fishing. This may be validated on BFAR's Fisherfolk Registration System, the national database for municipal fisher folk registration which was launched July this year. Depending on the area, the boats may be built either by the fisherfolk beneficiaries themselves or through the pooled workers of an LGU or at the BFAR regional centers where

volunteers could extend help in building the boats. We are calling on all interested individuals, public and private entities, local and foreign to work together and support the livelihood of those affected so they would have food not only for a day but for the days to come.

You can contact me at m_davantes@hotmail.com. ■



career took off after landing big contracts in Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore – becoming the advertising model for giant companies such as LG, Fila, Fubu, among others. He then moved to New York - landing gigs for Ralph Lauren, CK, and Saks Fifth Ave. He had walked for big name designers such as Michael Bastian, and was chosen to open the Amfar show. He also graced the covers and pages of various magazines such as Vogue, Style for Men, DSection, Hercules, Haute Living, and so forth.

fisherfolk families in severely hit provinces of Regions 6,7,8, and 4B. Twenty-one provinces with fishing communities were severely devastated by typhoon Yolanda – affecting an estimated 146,748 fishermen. 10,000 fishing boats would save the livelihood of 20,000 fishermen families. To build a boat with motor engine would cost approximately P15T and P6T without engine. The selection of beneficiaries will be done in consultation with the local government units, based on their list of



Photo shows men carrying building materials for the fishermen's boats



Constructing the fishermen's boats as part of the rehabilitation project

Watch the second episode of Mabuhay Montreal TV
Friday, December 27, 2013 at 7 P.M. on Videotron Channels 16, 616 HD, Bell Fibe 216/1216HD



EarthTalk®

E - The Environmental Magazine
Dear EarthTalk: Is there a way to get local communities involved in cleaning up waterways, like rivers, lakes, streams and creeks? -- Rebecca, via e-mail

Indeed, many of our local waterways have seen better days, thanks to decades of pollution. And cleaning them up and preventing further damage can be challenging, since much of the contamination has accumulated over time and results from what is known as "non-point source" pollution, which accounts for as much as 60 percent of the water pollution in the U.S.

"When it rains, fertilizer from lawns, oil from driveways, paint and solvent residues from walls and decks and even pet waste are all washed into storm sewers or nearby lakes, rivers and streams—the same lakes, rivers and streams we rely on for drinking water supply, boating, swimming and fishing," reports the non-profit Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). "Also, improper handling of materials around the house can lead to pollution."

According to NRDC, each of us can do our part to reduce this run-off pollution and thus help protect local waterways. For one, we can replace concrete and other hard surfaces around our homes with porous materials, so that rainwater drains naturally into the ground and not into pathways that lead it into waterways. We can landscape with native plants and natural fertilizers, and refrain from over-watering our lawns and gardens. And we can properly dispose of hazardous products (that is, not right down the drain), wash our cars at professional carwashes (where there are proper wastewater treatment procedures), recycle used motor oil, and use non-toxic alternatives for household chemicals whenever possible.

Of course, there is only so much that individuals can do on their own. While preventing pollution at the source is important, many waterways have so much legacy pollution in them already that they need to be cleaned up directly—no small job and typically way beyond the scope of a few individuals. Some municipal, county or state governments might be inclined to help, but getting friends and neighbors involved first is a good way to demonstrate community support. Also, local businesses, non-profit groups, youth centers and schools are often looking for ways to get people involved in community service projects, so asking around town might be the best way to enlist dozens or more volunteers.

Another way to get the ball rolling is to sign up with American Rivers' National River Cleanup

program. Individuals, organizations and anyone interested in conducting a cleanup on their local river can register with the program and get free trash bags as well as assistance with media coverage, volunteer promotion and technical support. The program has helped more than a million volunteers participate in thousands of cleanups covering more than 244,500 miles of waterways across the U.S. since it began in 1991.

"These cleanups have removed more than 16.5 million pounds of litter and debris from America's rivers and streams," reports American Rivers. 2012 was the most successful year to date in the history of the program, with 400+ registered cleanups, 92,500 volunteers nationwide, 3.5 million pounds of trash removed from American waterways, and 39,000 miles of waterway cleaned. The group is hoping 2013 will turn out to be another record year for the program.

CONTACTS: NRDC's "How to Clean Up Our Water," www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/gsteps.asp;

American Rivers' National River Cleanup, www.americanrivers.org/take-action/cleanup.

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From Page 4 Ethnic Media
 Cultural Diversity into Effective Business Strategy and Opportunity. Dr. Gabriel Huston, professor in the School of

president of NEPMCC (National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada) cited the fact that the 3-day seminar was equivalent to having earned credits from a one year programme in a university or

Chinese community newspaper that informed the government authorities about racism that a group of Chinese fishermen experienced, leading to legislative measures to correct the situation. She said that examples of reporting like this can usually be carried only in local community newspapers which have a positive impact on making a difference in our society. ■



A souvenir photo with Canadian Minister of Immigration & Citizenship during the gala night, December 7, 2013.



Olivia Chow, (4th from the right) the widow of Jack Layton, NDP leader who passed away on Aug. 22, 2011, is flanked by several ethnic press members.

International Business, Faculty of Business, Seneca College, who coordinated the seminars, gave a lecture on "The 5 Pillars of Me, Inc.: Your Strategic Business Roadmap, and "Partnering in Best Practices: Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility." Sun-Kyung (Sunny) Yi, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, talked about the "Potential of Ethnic Youth, Poly-ethnic and Trans-ethnic Groups for Canadian Ethnic Publishers." She is working on her Ph.D thesis on "being and becoming multi-cultural" which sounds quite interesting for immigrants because it touches on a common chord of experience of having been transplanted from one culture to another.

college. The knowledge one gained from the exposure to many ideas will certainly give the ethnic media a big boost to create the opportunity to succeed in a very challenging field of newspaper publishing.

The gala night was held on Saturday, December 7, 2013 which was graced by three important guests, namely, Chris Alexander, Minister of Immigration and Citizenship Canada, the Mayor of Markham, Ontario, Mr. Frank Scarpitti, and Jim Karygiannis, Liberal MP.

On the final day of the seminar, Mrs. Barbara Hall, Chairperson of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, acknowledged the important role played by the ethnic press. In particular, she recalled the report published in a

When the time to give the certificates came, Mr. Thomas Saras, the



Mr. Thomas Saras, president of NEPMCC, presenting the certificate of achievement to Zenaida Kharroubi, editor of the North American Filipino Star, for having participated in the 3-day professional development seminar, December 6 to 8, 2013 at Seneca College.



Canadian Immigration Minister Chris Alexander receiving a certificate of appreciation



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PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

Teus plays music to express his feelings

by W. G. Quiambao

Joven Teus, who hails from Pasay City, sings and plays the guitar and drum. Music runs in the family - his father played bandurria (a plucked chordophone from Spain similar to Mandolin), his mother used to sing and his brothers and sisters have performed abroad.

"It's funny because I didn't really go to school to study music," admitted Teus, who arrived in Montreal only last year. "Mine is purely talent. When I was young, I'd watch my family and listen to them perform."

After high school graduation in 1973, Teus was approached by his brother to play guitar in the latter's band. "Initially, I was hesitant because I was afraid that I couldn't meet the band's expectation. I was more experienced in playing the drum, not the guitar"

But Teus relented when his brother told him not to worry.

"He promised to train me," Teus said. "At night, I'll sleep at his house and stay there till after midnight. We'll practice until I became an expert in playing the guitar."

Teus, whose forte is playing standard music like *Mysty*, *The Nearness of You*, *All the Way* and even western music like *I love you Because*, believes that talent is more important. "Musicians who read notes can't play music once they lose them. For example, for fun, we would turn off the lights when we practised then. Friends who read notes couldn't perform. They're lost. They depended on their notes while those with just talent like me could still perform without notes. The bottom line is that it's even better if a musician has a talent and ability to read notes."

His breakthrough came in 1974 when he played as second lead/vocalist at *Baklad Disco* in *Pulang Lupa*, *Las Piñas*, Philippines. From 1975, he became the lead/bass guitarist and sometimes, the drummer of the band

playing in various clubs in the Philippines until 1993. Then from 1994 to 1995, he was the lead guitarist/vocalist when the band performed at *Farmland Hotel* and *Resort*, then at *Swiss Grand Hotel* in *Seoul Korea*. The band also performed at *Brau Haus International* in *China* in 2002 and at *Onigashima* in *Japan* from 2004 to 2005.

Teus said that the country where he enjoyed performing the most was in *Hiroshima Ken Fukuyuma, Japan*. "Japanese were very appreciative of our work. And they're very generous with tips. In fact, the other bands were jealous of us because we got more tips. I love Korea too, contrary to what I thought, Koreans were very generous too."

Looking back, Teus can't help comparing the music industry in the 70s and in the 90s when he was starting to play in the clubs. "There were few bands and a lot of clubs then. If we have issues with the owner of the club, we could easily quit and move to other clubs. But in the 90s, there were many bands and few places to play."

Although he enjoyed his job, he was ready to quit playing in the band in the late 80s. However, a friend prodded him to try *Harana (Serenade)*. He had no idea that he would love it.

"The band consists of a minimum five musicians," Teus said. "We normally started from 8 p.m. till about 2 in the morning. The money wasn't good. It was tiring. And we had to carry amplifier, drum, etc. On the other hand, *Harana* has a minimum of four members. The money was good. The hours were short, from lunch time to 2 p.m."

All we had to do was serenade the customers. Just play or sing their requests."

Nowadays, Teus misses singing and playing the guitar and drum. "My plan is to teach guitar lessons. To share my talents, especially, with the youth"

Gawad Kalinga (GK) Montreal stages fundraising for Yolanda victims

by W. G. Quiambao

A video clip of houses and bridges destroyed, residents left homeless and volunteers brought together to re-build the houses were the heart-wrenching images that the guests viewed at the GK (Mtl.) cocktail fundraising for the typhoon Yolanda victims held on Dec. 5 in a downtown hotel.

Monsanto are just two of the companies that decided to work with us. Oftentimes, we think charity means money. It means more than that. It means cooperation and working together. We have to set aside politics. It's important than pity."

Philip Peñalosa, one of the organizers of the event said, "I'm not involved in Gawad Kalinga. But I saw the need to help. I was



From left: W. G. Quiambao, Edén Peñalosa, Eric Tamayo (Philippine Consul General) and Fina Vergara.

Eric Tamayo, Philippine Consul General in Ottawa, said in his speech, "13.5 million were affected by the typhoon and out of that number, 3.5 million Filipinos were displaced, 1,100 are still missing and 800 million is the amount needed for relief and rehabilitation. Canada has not held back. It has responded swiftly. It has come up with a unique way of helping the Philippines by matching the amount of donation it will receive from Canadians. We're lucky to have Canada as a friend."

Gawad Kalinga (GK) which means "to give care" in Filipino is actually known as *Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation*, a Philippine-based poverty alleviation and nation-building movement.

With a growing number of advocates in the country, Canada has established a strong partnership with its government and gained support from companies, families and organizations allowing them to build 82 GK villages.

"Our goal is not only to give relief but also to completely eradicate poverty," said *Amir Billones*, who has been with the *Gawad Kalinga* for five years. "Peninsula Hotel and

born here but my parents are from the Philippines. I still find lots of identities. My aunts and cousins are from *Tacloban*. Their house was completely destroyed. For me, there is a personal connection. We all have to do something together."

The goal of the event is to raise \$15,000 to build four to five houses in the Philippines. The houses will be added to the number raised from other fundraising initiatives done by *Gawad Kalinga Canada*. Each home will be complemented with a sustainable family farming program. Farm input, water systems, and technical training have been devised and developed in partnership with the Philippines Department of Agriculture and agricultural state universities. The resulting village will be complete with a community facility that will be used for training, education and livelihood. ■

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO EVERYONE

FAMAS Community Center renamed JP Memorial Center

According to unverified reports received recently by this columnist, the Philippine Community Center (aka FAMAS Center) was renamed JP Memorial Center shortly after a group of the usual hypocrites barefacedly converted it into their own enclave to the unfair exclusion of the rest of the community for whose benefit the center was painstakingly established over the years in the first place. The Center is now so exclusive that even their then-allies are virtually banned from enjoying what-is-supposed-to-be-open-for-everybody community center. Thanks to JP, all that has been realized.

Before my readers jump into conclusion (if they haven't already), JP stands for "Just Private." But by sheer coincidence, it's also the initials of the most hubristic person in Canada, if not the world, and lone recipient of the egregious Maawaka Awards. But was it really just a coincidence? I have this funny feeling that the woman with the same initials and widely known for her vaingloriousness, among many other defects and negative traits, actually pressured the current leadership of FAMAS to rename the Center after her, partly to spite the previous FAMAS Executive Board for the snub she got from the organizers of the FAMAS 50th Anniversary Awards.

In an unrelated incident, that same vainglorious woman, ever spiteful and insecure, unnecessarily bawled a prominent community member out when the latter was at the Center attending an important meeting [on a special invitation from John Papadimas, the Regional Press Relations Advisor of Prime Minister Harper's office] and asked if she could use the Center's telephone. From a few-meter

distance, the termagant yelled, "No! Hindi mo magagamit ang telepono ng Center!" She behaved as if she owned the building or was the FAMAS president when she was a mere member of the Board of Trustees who didn't have any decision-making power of her own. She was full of herself like she always is.

Perhaps, that woman's already bad attitude got worse when she underwent treatment after being diagnosed with a dreaded disease not too long ago. Anyway, this corner wonders why the present FAMAS Executive Board seems to condone this kind of uncivilized and shameful behavior. Is the EB too milksoppy to go against the outrageous whims of that unselected spoiled brat? God bless FAMAS if it is.

IT LOOKS LIKE THEIR HONEYMOON IS FINALLY OVER

The stench emanating from their rotting coalition is so potent and inescapable that I could still smell it even though I'm more than 3970 kilometers away from Montreal. I am referring to the unsurprising break up of the strategic, but unnatural, alliance between the elitist Parado-Magallanes group and the proletarian Samahang Makabayan led by Cesar Manuel and Gaspar Dahiroy that was particularly formed more than two years ago for no other purpose but to grab the power from then-ruling Mabuhay Team led by then-President of FAMAS Aurora Osdon. This writer thought all along that it was just a matter of time and they would be at each other's throat, fighting over the proverbial spoils of war in case they would emerge victorious. Two-years after their defeat in 2011 election, there was a

reversal of fortune and they emerged victorious in 2013 poll. As predicted, the alliance that was begrudgingly born out of necessity and desperation rather than of genuine cooperation has started to unravel a few months later.

Reportedly, Parado and Dahiroy recently had a rancorous shouting match in full view of their respective die-hard supporters. Ayon sa report, nagreklamo raw ang grupo nina Manuel at Dahiroy na isinasapuwera na sila ni Parado sa mga importanteng aktibidad ng FAMAS gayong sila raw ang nagpanalo kina Quirapas at mas malaki ang hirap sa kanilang tagumpay noong nakaraang eleksyon. Puro raw hinugot sa Federation nina Angie Ogerio at Felix Reyes ang naa-appoint sa key positions ng FAMAS at wala nang kinuha sa Samahang Makabayan. Dahiroy also decries the lukewarm reception he and his group get from Parado whenever they are at the Community Center. Malaki na raw ang ipinag-iba ni Parado magmula nang mabalik sa kanila ang kapangyarihan na kung ilang taon din na pinagtuluan ng laway ng power-hungry at matagal nang nagpa-panggap na lider. Hindi lamang sina Manuel at Dahiroy ang namumuhi sa pinaggagagawa at inaasal ni Parado. Pati raw si Cely Dagsaan ay humiwalay na rin dahil hindi na n'ya masakmura ang pagka-adelantado at paghaharhari-an ni Miss Double H (hypocritical and hubristic).

Hindi naman daw si Parado ang presidente ng FAMAS, pero s'ya ang umaastang presidente at kung magsalita at kumilos ay parang mataas pa s'ya kay Quirapas o sa buong Executive Board. Kung bakit pumapayag ang EB na gawin sa kanila ito ni Parado ay hindi ko na alam.

ERIK HAMON AND THE HYPOCRITES AMONG HIS PINOY SUPPORTERS

As we already know, Erik Hamon was a candidate in the last Montreal municipal election. Many of Hamon's Pinoy supporters supported him mainly because of his half-Filipino status. Pinoy leaders of his campaign couldn't belabor their mantra enough that Filipinos should vote for Hamon because of the Filipino blood running in his veins.

Admittedly, I was inclined to throw my support for Hamon, but held it in abeyance upon learning that he might be complicit in his mother's alleged participation in a scam that victimized many Pinay caregivers and would-be caregivers in Montreal in 1999 and 2000. Understandably, he defended his mother against said allegation saying that it was impossible for

his mother to be involved in such a scam because she was only a receptionist in the company that she was working for at that time. I found his explanation very lame and full of holes so I supported Mr. Lionel Perez instead.

The allegation of wrongdoing committed by Hamon and/or his mother spread like wildfire and threatened to damage his already dwindling candidacy. It sent his mother and some of his major Pinoy supporters scampering to stem the bleeding before it was too late. One of them almost immediately called for the creation of a damage control committee. When it didn't pan out and the erosion of Erik's support continued, said "Hamonite," who appeared to have a knack for taking advantage of opportunities, switched allegiance to Lionel Perez at the eleventh hour when it was certain that his candidate would lose and the incumbent councilor for Darlington riding was going to be reelected. In the last issue of The Filipino Forum, Fred Magallanes, who was reprimanded a few times by the Quebec Press Council for questionable and unprofessional journalism and who has a pending case for defamation, blamed mudslinging by Erik Hamon's opponent's Pinoy supporters for Hamon's loss. According to Magallanes, Erik would have been the first ever Filipino-Canadian elected to the Montreal City Council had Au Osdon, James dela Paz and Gina Medina, among others, supported a Filipino-Canadian candidate and not eventual winner Lionel Perez.

Magallanes's assertion is full of hypocrisy because Alex Robles, who ran for city councilor many municipal elections ago, would have been the first ever Filipino-Canadian elected to the Montreal City Council had Magallanes and his group voted for Robles for the same reason that they would like Filipino electorate in Montreal to vote for Hamon. "Vote for Hamon because he is a Filipino," they would always say. Not only did Magallanes not vote for Robles despite the latter's Filipino-ness, but he also assassinated Robles' character by publishing in his trashy newspaper that Robles was paid to run and did not speak French. Instead they supported Robles' opponent, a multi-millionaire Indio-Canadian who lost his candidacy anyway.

By the way, I think that priests, pastors and ministros or any other leaders of religious groups will be better off if they stick to religion and refrain from publicly endorsing any particular candidate or getting involved in politics or political processes except to vote. ■

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Ask the Video Guy

by

Al Abdon

Tips on buying lenses

Are you shooting with a DSLR, cinema camera or camcorder with an interchangeable lens? Choices in your optics can be mind boggling. What each lens does varies by price, type and ability. This primer on lens families should point you in a new direction giving you abilities you never had before in depth of field, and control over your imaging.

Camera lenses vary widely in price, type and abilities. This page has helpful descriptions of many common lens families and explanations of what they offer. To learn more generally about which lenses you should use go visit www.lozeau.ca and click on lenses. If you reside in Toronto, I would recommend www.vistek.ca which has branches in Ottawa and Calgary.

Cine Lenses and F-Stop vs. T-Stop

What is the difference between T-Stop and F-Stop? You will notice that it's common for cine lens manufacturers to list the T-Stop value instead of F-Stop and still lens manufacturers to list the F-Stop value and no T-Stop value. F-Stop is a mathematical (theoretical) value describing the ratio of the aperture (lens opening) to focal length, where the focal length is divided by the lens aperture. A 100mm lens with an aperture opening of 50mm would have an F-Stop of f/2.0. A 100mm lens with an aperture of 100mm would have an F-Stop of f/1.0. Assuming

virtually no loss of light from the glass optics, it would also have a T- Stop of t/1.0.

Cine lenses are described in T-Stops because there is always a loss of light in an optical system. T-Stops are physical measurements carefully taken with scientific instruments which indicate the amount of light that actually comes out of the lens and onto the sensor. So an f/1.0 lens will actually have a different T- Stop value. Cine lenses are generally more expensive because you do get what you pay for which is a very accurate indication of light loss through the lens, and they are usually matched to each other so that one lens has exactly the same light loss as another. That way when the cinematographer is shooting with multiple cameras, each lens provides exactly the same amount of light to the sensor.

Buying a lens can be confusing: What is a prime lens? Are good lenses available on a meager budget? Is a zoom lens a good choice? Let's look at what kind of lenses you should consider and how a wise investment in a quality lens can be the difference between your audience reacting with a wow or a yawn.

I was shooting a DSLR at MMTV using a zoom lens on the set but the result was not as even when using a prime or fixed lens. My shot was almost rejected by the network because of the poor broadcast quality a zoom lens produces.

We know talking about buying DSLR camera lenses makes your mind get all fuzzy, but let's get focused and zoom in on buying the right lens for your specific needs. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money, but there are times when you're not spending money but investing in quality lenses that last and produce crisp, bright images.

An often forgotten element of video producing, lenses play a vital role. Average to good lenses are seldom given positive attention, while horrible lenses attract the wrong kind of attention: the "Why does my video look like it was shot through a soda bottle?" attention. Purchasing quality lenses can help avoid this issue.

For nearly all consumer camcorders, lenses are attached and can't be interchanged with other, specialized lenses. You're pretty much stuck with the lens that came with the camera. That's not to say it's a poorly performing lens, but your options for versatility are greatly reduced when some special situation calls for a shallow depth-of-field or a very wide view of a given area. However, when shooting video with a DSLR or one of the newer camcorders with interchangeable lens options, your available choices grow greatly. No longer are you limited to the manufacturer's lenses, you may shop for lenses created by Chrosziel, Rokinon,

Sigma, Tamron, Zeiss, and others that specialize in making lenses that provide combinations of quality, cost and ability.

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Harper Government Reminds Canadians to Make Smart Toy Choices this Holiday Shopping Season - Canadians encouraged to sign up for recall notices and alerts at healthycanadians.gc.ca

December 17, 2013
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OTTAWA, ONTARIO - Today, Parliamentary Secretary Eve Adams on behalf of Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health, hosted a toy safety demonstration to highlight the importance of making safe toy choices when shopping for children this holiday season and encouraged Canadians to visit healthycanadians.gc.ca, a one stop shop for consumers.

"When choosing the perfect gift for a child in your life this holiday season, start by reading the toy label," said Parliamentary Secretary Adams. "Unsafe toys can put a child at risk for illness or injury, so it's important to make sure that the toys you select are well made and age-appropriate."

When buying toys for children of any age, consumers should always follow these safety tips:

Purchase age appropriate toys, as toys for older children may contain small parts or other hazards that may make them unsafe for young children;

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Toys can be recalled for health and safety reasons. Our free Recalls and Safety Alerts application for Apple, Android and BlackBerry delivers up-to-date and reliable health and safety information right to your smartphone. Canadians are encouraged to sign up through the Healthy Canadians web site.

"Toys should be a source of holiday fun for kids," said Diane Brisebois, President and CEO of the Retail Council of Canada. "Before buying a toy, consumers should always do their homework to make sure they are making appropriate choices."

Once the toys are at home, parents and caregivers should continue to be vigilant. For example, toys should be checked often for hazards like loose parts, broken pieces or sharp edges and any weak or damaged toys should be repaired or discarded. For more information, please read Health Canada's guide to toy safety *Is Your Child Safe? - Playtime.*

Toymakers in Canada have to make sure their products follow the rules set out in the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act and associated Toys Regulation. Health Canada's Product Safety Officers regularly check for unsafe toys in the marketplace. Even so, unsafe toys can make their way into homes. Being informed and aware of potential risks will help you protect your child's health and safety.

If consumers experience a health or safety incident with a toy they have in their home, they should report it to the manufacturer or the retailer it was bought from. They can also report incidents on Health Canada's website.

-30-

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From Page 2 Aquino

Newsmen merely report the facts presented before them. They won't say there are looting if there are none. They won't say the death toll could reach 10,000 if they were not told so, or if they did not witness the hundreds of bodies recovered daily. They won't say relief goods have not reached certain villages, if indeed they have.

Aquino should have commended instead the media men for leaving the comfort of their offices so that the rest of the nation would know what was happening in that part of the country. Aquino saw the devastation himself; why has he not come out of denial and admitted that the devastation was truly enormous, and instead of ranting against media and the local executives, he should have rallied the entire government machinery to help the typhoon survivors.

He would rather blame than support the media and the local executives who were sweating it out in the disaster areas. Who is overflowing with negativism — he or the media? And yet, he is quick to criticize media for negativism?

Coming from Aquino, the son of the country's most revered democratic icons, it is, to say the least, disappointing. The son the people and the media had expected too much has

now resorted to blaming everybody else except himself for the poor ratings that he has been getting. The son everybody had expected to respect press freedom now wants media to temper its criticism.

But who will decide which is sensationalism and which is the truth? Should it be the presidential spokesmen? Should it be Aquino? What is sensationalism to Aquino and his aides could actually be the truth. And that is not for Aquino, his aides, or even the media to decide. The media merely reports the events that happen, and the columnists comment on such events. It is eventually the people who will decide what to believe and who to believe.

We cannot discount the fact that some media practitioners may have some biases or prejudices, but let the readers be the judge of that, not the politicians whose perception of what is wrong what is right, or what is true and what is not, is clouded by their own selfish interest.

The government that won on a legacy of freedom should let freedom reign. The government that got its nod from the people on a platform of integrity and credibility should not lose its patience in proving it is abiding by its commitment to truth. ■

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Philippine Cuisine and Favorite Food

Compiled by Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi



Crab Torta

Recipe Ingredients

- alimango or alimasag (crabs)
- eggs
- onion celery or green onions or both (if you have kinchay, use it)
- salt
- white pepper
- garlic (extra garlic for frying)

Whip eggs. As to the number of eggs, it depends on how much crab meat/vegetable mixture you have.

Mix crab meat, "alige", onion, celery or green onions (note: I like celery better in this dish, it gives it a little bit of flavor, kinchay or cilantro is also good to use here), a little bit of garlic, salt and pepper to taste - like making an omelet. Mixture has to have a consistency that the ingredients don't fall apart or run.

oil for deep frying

Stuff crab shell with the crab/egg/vegetable mixture.

Cooking Instructions for (Crab Torta)

Boil crabs until red. Take meat out of crab including the "alige" if present. Save as much as much meat as you can. Make sure not to include 'bones' in the meat that you collect. Set meat aside and also save the shell.

Heat Oil in pan (a wok works best here), add garlic. Once the garlic is brown, fry crab. You probably need to deep fry so heat a lot of oil. This is very quick actually. When the crab meat mixture turns brown, take the crab out of oil and drain (paper towel works best).

Slice celery and onion. Set aside.



Chicken Afritada

Chicken Afritada is undoubtedly a Filipino meal. It provides a savory tomato base sauce and cooked with vegetables such as bell pepper, potatoes and green peas. In some old Philippine cook books it is known as Fritada - which is a Spanish dish, that actually means to fry up. Commonly serve during special occasions like fiesta and birthdays for it can be cook easily in large volumes.

- 1 Red or Green Bell Peppers, diced
- 1/3 cup Green Peas
- 2 medium Potatoes, cubed
- 3 pieces Garlic, minced
- 1 medium Onion, chopped
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup Cooking Oil
- All-purpose Flour for dredging
- Salt and Pepper to taste

There are also variations with this Filipino recipe. Some differ from the main ingredient used. Others cook it with pork or chicken depending on their mood or preferences. Other also have some add-on when cooking Afritada. They tend to add other kinds of vegetable, or even add a sausage or hotdogs which complements well with the recipe. There are also Afritada recipe that has a combination of pork and chicken as main ingredient. Anyways, that up to you on how you cook your Afritada. Presented here is the basic method of cooking an Afritada Chicken recipe. Let us now learn how to cook a Filipino recipe - Chicken Afritada.

Tips to cook Chicken Afritada:


Scour the chicken pieces in flour and pan-fry in low heat. You should not burn. You simply need fry the chicken until golden brown. Making use of the same pan, cook fry the garlic, and onions. Apply again the chicken and stir in the tomato sauce and chicken broth. Take along a boil. Turn the heat right down to simmer for 10 minutes.

Apply the potatoes and bell peppers and cook for another 15 minutes more or till the potatoes are tender.

Apply the green peas, after that season with salt and pepper. Serve with rice. ■

Ingredients for Chicken Afritada:

- 2 pounds Chicken Thigh as well as Legs
- 1 small can Tomato Sauce



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SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

'My father threatened to kill me' says Gretchen



Actress Gretchen Barretto said her father, Miguel Barretto, threatened to shoot her and two of her siblings when he supposedly learned of their plans to testify in court against their youngest sister Claudine.

Gretchen made the accusation as she spoke with reporters shortly before a hearing on a case involving Claudine and husband Raymart Santiago at the Marikina Regional Trial Court on Thursday.

The older Barretto actress, along with another sibling, JJ, gave their testimonies supporting Santiago's allegations against their sister in the closed-door hearing.

"Nandito ako, may takot, pero haharapin ko 'to dahil ito ang katotohanan," said Gretchen. "At least nandito kayo. Pag may mangyari, alam ninyo."

The actress' testimony is in relation Santiago's legal feud with Claudine, who accused of him "physical, sexual, psychological and economic" abuse supposedly dating back to 2002.

The former couple married in church rites in March 2006. They have two children -- an adopted daughter, Sabina, 9; and a biological son, Santino, 6.

Responding to Claudine's accusations, which were detailed in an Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children (VAWC) case in August, Santiago accused his wife of domestic violence, having a history of drug abuse, and being mentally ill.

The actor's statements were supported by accounts of Gretchen, along with two other Barretto siblings, Marjorie and JJ, in the same affidavit.

According to Santiago's legal counsel, Atty. Ruth Castello, the hearing on Thursday was specifically on the consolidated cases of Claudine's petition for a temporary protection order against her husband, and their custody battle over Sabina and Santino.

Shortly after the hearing, Gretchen was asked to detail her father's alleged threat against her. The actress said the Barretto patriarch learned of her plan to appear in court from her eldest sibling, Mito.



Miguel Barretto

"Sinabihan ng daddy ko ang kapatid kong lalaki, ang pinakamatanda, at ang pamangkin ko na si John, na pag mag-testify daw si JJ, at nalaman niyang mag-te-testify si JJ, sabi niya babarilin niya," she said.

"At sinabi naman ng aking pamangkin na, 'Tita Gretch, Tita Marj will testify.' At sabi niya (Miguel Barretto), 'I will kill them.'"

Gretchen, in a published statement in October, detailed Claudine's alleged mental illness and drug use, and how their family supposedly conspired to have the youngest of seven siblings hospitalized for treatment.

This was in response to Miguel Barretto's statements defending Claudine (video above), and criticizing her and Marjorie for "bullying" their sister. He also urged Gretchen and Marjorie to drop the Barretto surname.

The siblings' feud with their parents first went public in April, when their mother, Inday, released a statement saying she has disowned Gretchen in favor of Claudine. ■

Karylle mum on rumored marriage with Yael Yuzon



Yael Yuzon and Karylle Tatlonghari

Singer-actress Karylle Tatlonghari remains coy about her reported planned marriage with Spongecola front man Yael Yuzon.

In a report published early this month, The STAR entertainment editor Ricky Lo said that the two are planning to tie the knot in March next year.

But the "It's Showtime" co-host neither confirmed nor denied the news.

"Kailan ba naman ako nag-confirm or nag-deny?" she said in an interview with entertainment news site Philippine Entertainment Portal.

The report also said she didn't give anyone permission to spread the news about her alleged wedding.

"Kung magko-confirm, ako na

lang magsusulat para ako ang naka-scoop," Karylle told the entertainment news site.

This is expected from the 32-year-old Kapamilya artist, who has not even directly admitted her relationship with Yael.

Christian Bautista said in a previous interview that Karylle hasn't told him about the alleged wedding, but he'll support his "Cinderella" co-star whatever happens next year for her.

"I think it's too personal right now. So when she's ready, I will be ready to talk, he said of Karylle.

The Kapamilya artist was previously in a relationship with Kapuso actor Dingdong Dantes. ■

Daughter prays for Melanie Marquez's recovery after serious car accident



Melanie Marquez

The daughter of 1979 Miss International Melanie Marquez has called for prayers while the former beauty queen is being treated for bone fracture which she sustained when her car fell into a ravine in Utah last Dec. 8.

On her Facebook account, Maxine Bumgardner posted a collage of photos of Melanie in her hospital bed and the wrecked vehicle.

"Please pray for my mom, Arline, and nanay. They were in a car accident a couple days ago and although they are stable and in better condition than

before they will need your prayers, love and support. They hit black ice and slid into a cement canal. My brother Adam was with them and walked out with only a couple bruises. We are all so lucky that they are still alive because things could've gone so much worse than it did," read Maxine's post.

An InterAksyon.com report quoted one Jullie Lopez who claimed to have spoken with Melanie in the hospital. Jullie said Melanie told her that the ravine was "12 feet" deep and that she only managed to get out of the car and crawl up the hill because "para daw may anghel na bumuhat sa kanya."

As soon as she got a signal on her phone, Melanie called up Maxine and used GPS for the ambulance to locate them.

"Okey na naman siya (Melanie) pero maraming X-rays, MRI tapos kailangan na rin niyang mag-brace at hindi pa siya pwedeng bumangon. Medyo maga rin ang face niya kasi tumama sa matigas na bagay nung nahulog sila," Lopez was quoted to have said.

It is said that the group came from Las Vegas en route to Richfield, Utah when the accident happened. ■

Drunk Anne Curtis says sorry after slapping John Lloyd Cruz

Popular TV host, product endorser and actress Anne Curtis admitted on Sunday that she wasn't in the "right state of mind" when she slapped and berated fellow ABS-CBN artist John Lloyd Cruz at a bar in The Fort, Taguig City, last week.

Sounds more like a meltdown, to her critics Online reports say Curtis also slapped a magazine editor and screamed at TV host-model Phomela Baranda at the posh Privé Luxury Club on Nov. 23.

It was not clear what prompted Curtis' outburst but, addressing the issue via the micro-blogging site Twitter last weekend, she admitted she had had "one too many drinks."

Which should probably make the makers of an alcoholic product that she endorses happy. But they can't claim all the credit.

In her "tweet," Curtis said she had been "on the super popular juice cleanse for three days and attended my best friend's bachelorette [party] that night."

"Juice" on top of juice. That might explain why she was cranky.

The reports talk about an enraged Curtis emerging from the bar's toilet, demanding, "Who's banging [on] my door?"



Anne Curtis (left) and John Lloyd Cruz (file photos)

Baranda has not commented on eyewitness accounts that Curtis told her, "I can buy you, your friends and this club!"

Meaning, cheeky observers have commented on Facebook that the toilet door wasn't hers at that point, so the banging couldn't have been the reason.

Curtis' Twitter post put part of the blame on an unnamed person's "inappropriate behavior," but she shared an insight with her reported 5 million followers: "That's why they say, 'Drink in moderation'... I will charge it

to experience... A lesson learned."

She decided to explain, she said, because she owed fans "my honesty." She added: "I've always been an open book and I don't like to hide anything."

But that was eight days after the incident.

In any case, she thus confirmed the slapping incident and said she had apologized "to all parties included." She also said the person who triggered her anger had apologized and that she accepted the apology.

She wouldn't identify the person, though, "because I'm not the type to

ruin someone else's name."

Curtis apologized to her fans, whom she felt she had let down.

"As you all see, I'm just like any other person that makes mistakes in life," said the big stakes endorser, certainly one of the most identifiable faces on billboards across the country.

The Inquirer sought Baranda by phone for a reaction, but she did not pick it up.

Actor Sam Milby, Curtis' ex-boyfriend, on Monday defended the actress, saying: "A lot of people are quick to judge. People have to remember that [show-biz personalities] are only human. We also commit mistakes."

The actor, who is currently promoting a coming movie said he was shocked to learn of the incident. He refused to elaborate, apart from saying: "You know how show biz is. You say one thing and it gets blown out of proportion. It's better [for me to stay out of it]. I wasn't there, anyway."

He also said he admired the actress for owning up. "This is something that will soon pass," he said, "with all the support she is getting from her friends and followers." ■

Justin Bieber uses star power to do the right thing

How Bieber spent time with "the strongest people I know" by By Nestor U. Torre

Justin Bieber has been getting a lot of bad press of late, with his forays into cathouses, rowdy carousing and hotel-room trashing, and surly encounters with the paparazzi giving him blackeyes in media reports.

But, just last week, the young global sensation made up for all that negativism by unexpectedly flying down to storm-lashed Tacloban and urging all of his fans and Twitter followers worldwide to send donations in cash and kind to the ravaged southern city.

Some Filipinos are surprised that Bieber and other popular international stars (including the recently departed Paul Walker) would go out of their way to help our storm victims recover from the deadly disaster.

However, the reason for the unusually strong stellar response is all too obvious: "Yolanda's" wrath was so unprecedented and leveled entire towns, thus touching hearts in a most painfully urgent way, and prompting big stars to use their celebrity to galvanize millions of donors worldwide to help mitigate the far-reaching and continuing tragedy.

For his part, Bieber held out his helping and caring hand in an empathetic and natural way, completely in keeping with his youthful persona—and viewers all over the world were convinced that this unexpected visit was genuinely caring, not a savvy effort to rehabilitate his currently bruised stellar image.

Bieber's most inspired move was to play basketball with some startled Tacloban youths—who will probably henceforth tell their great-



BIEBER FEVER International pop singing sensation Justin Bieber hugs a young survivor of Supertyphoon "Yolanda" during his visit to an evacuation center in Palo, Leyte province.



Canadian pop megastar Justin Bieber plays basketball with a young survivor of super typhoon "Yolanda" in Palo, Leyte, on Dec. 10. He described Filipinos as "the strongest people I know" and his experience with the kids as "true happiness".

grandchildren over and over again about that amazing day, way back in 2013, when they swirled the spheroid for a few beautiful minutes with this hotshot star from Hollywood!

The salubrious effects of Bieber's consoling detour to Tacloban cannot be gainsaid. Not only did it raise additional millions for urgent relief and rehabilitation costs, but it also put a

warmly human face on this phenomenon called Celebrity itself.

Most of the time, stars use their popularity and fame for exclusively self-serving purposes, laughing all the way to the bank. —But, sometimes, when disaster strikes a particularly telling blow on celebrities' sensibilities, it forces them to realize that there's more to life than the perks of popularity. —And that, in fact, celebrity is more than just a perk, it can be a power, which can be used to inspire others to help the shell-shocked victims of disaster, by way of their stellar example.

Veteran caregiving luminaries like Bono and Angelina Jolie have known and used this power for a long time, but it's great to see that much younger stars like Bieber are now following suit.

Since young luminaries influence and inspire millions of followers, this new development or intensification of the power of the caring celebrity is most noteworthy, and hopes are high that more local and foreign stars will be persuaded to use their own star power—and do the right thing!

P.S.: Alas, only a couple of days after Bieber's beautiful act for typhoon victims, he was once again being rapped and razzed in the media for (allegedly) churlishly describing a chubby young woman as "a beached whale"—and suggesting that she should join "The Biggest Loser!"

Uh-oh, is it back to snarly, swamy times again for our new hero? Perhaps. —But, you know what? We choose to continue to focus on the new and caring and now positively power-full Bieber—and we're still a Belieber! ■

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.17***Miss World 2013 Megan Young visits Tacloban**

Miss World 2013 Megan Young is back in the Philippines to personally give help to the victims of super typhoon Yolanda.

Megan flew back in the country on November 28, and headed to the Philippine Red Cross office to get updates on the relief happening for the affected areas.

Philippine Red Cross Chairman Richard Gordon personally briefed Megan and Miss World Philippines Directress Cory Quirino on the Visaya's present condition.

Megan said to Chairman Gordon, "basically, what we want to do is visit these areas and see the devastation, to see the magnitude of it and to see what we can focus on giving to them."

Besides personally helping to deliver aid to the victims, Megan also gave the organization all the donations she gathered in her tours from different countries.

After the briefing, Megan even helped in repacking the relief goods to be sent to the affected areas.

According to Miss World website, Megan is scheduled to visit Cebu today, and will proceed to Basesy,



Megan Young preparing the relief goods to be distributed to the victims of super typhoon Yolanda.

Western Samar, Tacloban, and Tanauan.

On the next few days, she'll also visit Ormoc, Estancia, Iloilo and Loon. ■

Media Mileage?

Concepcion belied speculations that the whole issue is nothing but a publicity stunt for Locsin's film, "The Legal Wife." Concepcion said that she would not allow herself to be used in such type of promotional gimmick.



Angel Locsin & Phil Younghusband

"Ang hindi ko rin alam kung part 't ng promo ng maging teleserye ng ex-girlfriend niya... Pero sana naman, huwag na nila ako idawit or isama sa gano'n kasi may mga iba namang nangyayari sa buhay ko.

Napaka-busy ko rin. Ang dami kong ginagawa, bakit ako tsinitismis?"

Concepcion also clarified, however, that she bears no ill feelings towards Locsin or Younghusband. "I have nothing against him. Pero hindi ko siya... Pati si Angel, hindi ko naman siya... Hindi kami magkaaway, hindi rin kami close..."

She added, "Baka naman may mga tao sa paligid na gusto kaming i-connect, o gusto kaming sirain, or siraan."

In a separate interview with PEP, Younghusband was asked on the possibility of having relationship with Concepcion. He then brushed off the question, saying he is "still in love" with Locsin.

"Angel is the only one I'm thinking about on my lonesome," he said.

Locsin later reacted on the admission from her ex-BF more than a month after their breakup.

"Sana nasabi niya muna sa akin nang diretso... Nagulat lang ako, kasi nasabi niya sa media agad. Nag-uusap naman kasi kami eh," the 28-year-old actress said in a separate interview on ABS-CBN.

"Pero wala naman isyu. Baka open lang talaga siya. Nagulat lang ako," she explained. ■

KC clears romantic links with Phil Younghusband

KC Concepcion

Actress-TV host KC Concepcion once and for all clears the rumors linking her to Azkals player Phil Younghusband, saying the only time they ever spoke was during an interview more than a year ago.

"Ako, unang-una... Hindi ko siya

kilala. I mean, once ko lang siya nakausap siguro, which is nung interview pa with 'yung girlfriend niya at the time... Pero wala talaga kaming konek, so hindi ko talaga alam kung bakit kailangan akong isama sa ganyan," the 28-year-old actress said in an interview with ABS-CBN News.

Concepcion was referring to the interview on the defunct ABS-CBN talk show "The Buzz," which she formerly co-hosted.

Younghusband's girlfriend at the time was actress Angel Locsin, who confirmed her breakup with the football player in October this year.

"Honestly, ang tagal ko na ring naririnig 'yan... Ayoko na nga mag-comment about it, kasi nakakapagod na rin 'yung tsismis na wala namang pinaggagalingan," she explained.



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Who provoked Anne Curtis' 'bad behavior'? by Euden Valdez

Never drink alcohol on an empty stomach.

That was the lesson top celebrity endorser and award-winning actress Anne Curtis learned—the controversial way—after the much talked about slapping incident on November 23 at Privé Luxury Club in Bonifacio Global City.

Apparently, she had been on a three-day juice diet just before attending a party.

First reported the Philippine Entertainment Portal (pep.ph) on December 1, the story quoted former The Manila Times society contributor and now Circuit events magazine editor and publisher JR Isaac, who narrated how the A-List celebrity blew her top at the swanky club.

According to the affable JR, he was hanging out with pals at the VIP area of Privé, half of which had been closed for a private event—a bachelorette party that Anne had organized for a friend.

JR's party comprised of actors John Lloyd Cruz and Jake Cuenca, telecoms executive Leah de Guzman and model Phoenela Barranda, along with others.

Talking with pep.ph, JR continued, "Leah and I are just between the toilet door and the bar. I think I was standing and waiting for my drink, talking to Leah.

Then we heard a loud voice saying, 'Who's banging my door?'

We didn't know who or where it was at first! Just loud, coming from behind us. When we turned around, we saw, stepping out of the toilet, Anne, very mad.

"Then all of a sudden, pak-pak. My left cheek. Then Leah was also slapped. Then JL [John Lloyd] was



Anne Curtis

also slapped," he related.

As the story went, Anne pointed fingers, shouting unpleasant things at John Lloyd and Phoenela, until she was eventually escorted out of the premises.

While many entertainment scribes have declared the slapping incident to be the worst crisis in the erstwhile showbiz sweetheart's career, the 28-year-old It Girl, managed to turn it around making both personal apologies to the aggrieved parties, as well as a public apology over Twitter.

On the same day the PEP report was published, Anne humbly and openly addressed the issue, speaking to some 6 million followers on her social networking site.

"Hey everyone. I will be making my official statement now & after this, I will not be giving any interviews about this issue anymore. I choose to do this right away because I've always been

an open book and I don't like to hide anything . . .

"For those who have read about the issue, yes, most of it is true. I admit to that & I have apologized to all parties included immediately," she admitted.

For her brave act, seasoned showbiz observers—who were gathered the following evening at talent manager Perry Lansigan's Christmas dinner for a cause—opined that the issue will soon be forgotten because of Anne's apology.

JR himself confirmed that Anne said sorry to him the very next day, with a text that said, 'JR! It's Anne. Got your number from Monique! Tried messaging you on Facebook this morning. Just want to apologize for my behavior! I'm so so so sorry. I'm so ashamed [frown] would never act like that in the right state of mind! I'm so sorry. Please forgive me!'

JR replied, "Hi Anne, just woke up and read your text. Apology accepted . . . On a lighter note, you owe me a tight hug!!! Going back to sleep, nursing my hang over."

What showbiz observers are interested to find out, however, is who Anne was referring to in her tweet as



"the person who started all of this."

She wrote, "When I was told of my behavior AND the person who started all of this, due to this person's inappropriate behavior, apologized to me too. Just as I did. Which I accepted too. I choose not to go into detail because I'm not the type to ruin someone else's name."

Was she provoked is the lingering question now, which is not to point fingers at any of the personalities included in the unfortunate incident.

As one respected entertainment journalist commented, "It isn't in Anne's nature to do that, drunk or not."

For her part, Anne has rightly chosen to leave the issue behind after clearing her conscience of her mistakes.

As she said at the beginning of Showtime on Monday, "Isang masaya at moving on na tanghali sa inyo my super sexy madlang people!" ■

Willie Revillame open to idea of ABS-CBN comeback

It seems Willie Revillame hasn't closed the door on returning to ABS-CBN.

"Alam mo, sa totoo lang, kung babalik ako sa ABS-CBN, gusto ko pa rin ang 'Wowowee'... 'Wowowee' pa rin," Willie replied to ABS-CBN reporter Mario Dumauual when asked on the possibility of coming back to his home network for 12 years, as quoted by PEP at a recent album launch.

He said that his defunct noontime variety TV show "ang nagbigay sa akin ng lahat ng ito," referring to his Wil Tower Mall, located right across ABS-CBN.

"During the time na nasa ABS-CBN ang 'Wowowee,' dun ko nabili 'tong tatlong lupa na 'to, sabay-sabay. For a span of one month, binili ko 'to, sabay-sabay. Binayaran ko ng cash..." Willie narrated.

The 52-year-old comedian-TV host was enjoying "Wowowee's" steady five-year run, when on May 2010, he was involved in a controversy with then "The Buzz" segment host and showbiz writer



Jobert Sualdito, which led to Willie's eventual resignation. He then transferred to TV5 on which he

spawned variety shows "Willing Willie," "Wil Time Bigtime," and lastly "Wowowillie," which aired its final

episode Oct. 12 this year.

More important than his return, is that Willie seems to have already buried the hatchet.

"Ako naman, wala naman akong hinanakit eh. Kung nangyari man 'yon, puwede naman akong magpakumbaba, humingi ng tawad kung sino ang nasaktan, kung sino man 'yan."

He pointed out, that forgiveness, "lagi (naman 'yang) nasa puso natin eh."

"Kung nagkamali ako, pasensiya na, ganun talaga. Masyado lang akong nagko-concentrate sa programang 'yan ('Wowowee'), maliit na bagay, naapektuhan ka. Eh sa akin, balewala na 'yan."

Willie added, "Kung tatanggapin ako, okay. Kung hindi, ganun din naman eh."

He just wants the program to be "parang 'Wowowee' pa rin. Opening, sumasayaw, kumakanta. Gusto ko nakikita 'yung mga nanay, lola... At nagbibigay ng papremyo, ng jacket, bigay ng cell phone, bigay ng pera - 'yun ang gusto ko." ■

TAGALOG CORNER

By Willie Quiambao

Kahanga-hangang mangalap ng pondo sa mga nasalanta subalit...

Mahigit ng isang buwan ang nakalipas nang manalanta ang bagyong Yolanda sa Pilipinas. Bumuhos ang donasyon na pera, pagkain at damit mula sa ibang bansa. Kabilang dito ang komunidad natin sa Montreal.

Isa sa mga nagbigay ng donasyon ay Pilipina. Sa halip na bayaran ang kanyang apartment, ibinigay niyang donasyon ang kaniyang pera para sa mga biktima. Nakatatawa subalit ito ay totoo. Makapaghihintay ang may ari ng apartment subalit hindi ang mga taong nangangailangan ng tulong, sabi niya.

Kahanga-hanga ang ginawa ng Pilipina. Subalit sa nasaksihan ko kamakailan habang naglalakad sa Chinatown, hindi ko maiwasang magkaroon ng alinlangan kung kaagad akong magbibigay ako o hindi ng donasyon sa mga nasalanta ng bagyo.

Naglalakad ako sa kamakailan sa Chinatown nang may nakita akong tatlong intsik na may hawak na "placards" na nagsasaibing "Our organization is fundraising for the victims of typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines." Sa simula, naantig ang aking damdamin - mga dayuhan na tumutulong sa mga Pilipino sa Pilipinas. At itinanong ko sa aking sarili kung bakit nila ito ginagawa sa lansangan. Hindi ko maiwasang tanungin sila kung ang ginagawa nila ay lehitimo. Siyempre, ang kasagutan nila ay "oo".

Aminin natin na may ganitong mga tao sa ating komunidad. Kung minsan ay ginagawa nila ito hindi sa dala ng matinding pangangailangan ng pera kundi nais nilang magsamantala sa ibang tao. Iyon ang makapagpapaligaya sa kanila.

Mahigit nang sampung taon ang nakalipas, isang kalamidad sa Quezon sa Pilipinas ang naganap. Tulad ng dati, isang lider ng komunidad ang nagprisinta na umuwi sa Pilipinas upang personal na dalhin ang peranganalikom sa isang organisation. Lumipas ang mga buwan subalit wala mang sulat ng pasasalamat at pagpapatunay mula sa organisasyon na natanggap ang donasyon o hindi. Dahil sa ang lider ay kilala sa paggawa ng sariling publisidad, nakapagtataka na wala mang litrato niya ang nalathala sa pahayagang pang-komunidad na iniaabot ang tseke sa tumanggap ng donasyon. Ang ipinalathala ng lider ay ang larawan niya sa harap ng simbahan sa kanilang bayan sa Luzon.

Ang bulung-bulungan ay kumalat. Ang mga kasapi ng komunidad ay nagsimulang magtanong kung ano ang hangyari sa donasyon.

Dahil sa bulung-bulungan makalipas ang isang taon, ang lider ay umuwi sa Pilipinas. Nang bumalik siya sa Montreal, tulad ng inaasahan ng

maraming nagmamaisid, lumitaw ang resibo na tila nagawan ng paraaon mabago upang lumafas na kapani-paniwala. Isa namang lider ng komunidad na may koneksyon sa Pilipinas ang ipinatanong sa banko kung may natanggap nga na pera. Ang sagot ay "hindi." "Hindi iyon ang huling pagkakataon na ang lider ay nangalap ng pondo para sa mga biktima ng kalamidad.

Isa naman kuwento ang ibinhagi ni BB, isang lider ng komunidad. Ang kaibigan niyang Canadian ay naglalakad sa Cote des Neiges nang lapitan siya ng isang Pilipino para sa donasyon na ibigay sa mga biktima ng Yolanda. Dahil sa mga Canadian ay bukas-palad sa mga a mga nangangailangan, nagbigay siya ng \$100 na pera. Walang resibo ang ibigay sa kaniya. Nang tanungin niya ang Pilipino kung may katibayan ito na may karapatan siyang manghingi ng donasyon, ang Canadian ay pinakitaan ng kard. Siguro, FAMAS membership card. Ang isang higit na nakatatawa ay ang karanasan ng asawa ni BB. Siya ay may kaibigang Pilipina na nagbigay ng donasyon na mga gamait na damit at dyaket. Ang kaniyang batang anak ay nasa Cote des Neiges nang makita niya ang isang Pilipino na suot ang kaniyang dyaket na dati ay pag-aari niya. "Akin 'yan,' ang sigaw niya. Nang malaman ng ina ang nangyari, itinanong niya sa Pilipino kung saan binili ang dyaket. Ang sagot ay, "Hindi ko ito binili. Nanggaling ito sa FAMAS." Galit na galit ang ina na madaling nagtungo sa FAMAS at nagkatanong sa taong nakatalagang magbantay kung ano ang nangyari dyaket na kaniyang ibinigay na donasyon. Wala siyang natamong kasagutan.

Ang tunulong sa mga nangangailangan ay kahanga-hanga. Subalit hindi tayo dapat padala sa ating damdamin. Suriin muna natin kung may kredibilidad ang taong nangangalap ng pondo at ang organisasyon na tatanggap ng donasyon. Higit sa lahat, sabihin natin sa taong nangangalap ng pondo na ilathala ang mga panagalan ng nagbigay ng donasyon at ang halaga nito tulad ng ginagawa ng taong namamahala ng Gazette Fundraising Drive. Sabihin din natin na ilathala ang pagpapatunay na tinanggap ang donasyon.

Dapat ay maging maingat tayo. Mapanuri.



It's commendable to help the Yolanda victims but

by W. G. Quiambao

It's been more than a month since typhoon Yolanda wrecked havoc in the Philippines. Donations like money, food and clothings poured in from the Philippines and other countries. Among them was our community in Montreal.

One of the people who donated from Montreal was a Filipina. Instead of paying her apartment, she donated her money for the victims. It's funny but it's true. Her landlord could wait but not the victims who needed help in the Philippines, she said.

What the Filipina did was worthy. But because of what I witnessed recently while walking down in Chinatown, I couldn't help having a doubt whether to immediately give donation to fundraisers for the victims of Yolanda or not.

Three Chinese were holding placards that read, "Our organization is fundraising for the victims of typhoon in the Philippines. Initially, I was touched - foreigners helping the Filipinos in the Philippines. But I asked myself why they were doing this on the street, not in their office. But I couldn't help questioning them if what they were doing was legitimate. Of course, their answer was "yes". I think they just want to take advantage of people.

Let's admit it, there are people like these Chinese in our community. Sometimes, they do it not because they're in dire need of money but because they feel good taking advantage of other people.

More than a decade ago, a calamity hit Quezon in the Philippines. As usual, one community leader didn't waste any time to fundraise for the victims. In a few weeks, the leader volunteered to go to the Philippines to personally deliver the money she collected to an organization there. Several months passed by but there was not even a letter of thanks or acknowledgement from the organization whether the donation was received or not. Considering that the leader was known to generate her own publicity, many found it unusual that there was no picture of his/her in the community newspaper handing a cheque to the recipient of the donation. What the leader published was his/her picture posing in front of the church in

his/her hometown in Luzon.

Rumour circulated around. Members of the community began asking what happened to the donation. Because of the rumour, after a year, the leader went back to the Philippines. When he/she came back to Montreal, as expected by many observers, a receipt that seemed to be doctored surfaced. Another leader in the community who had connection in the Philippines asked a friend to inquire if the bank received any money. The answer was "No. That was not the last time that the said leader fundraised for the victims of calamity.

Here is another story shared by BB, a leader in the community. His Canadian friend was walking down in Cote des Neiges when he was approached by a Filipino asking for donation for the Yolanda victims. Because Canadians are generous in giving donations to those in need, he gave the Filipino \$100 cash. No receipt was issued. When he asked the Filipino for any proof that he was authorized to solicit for donation, the former was shown a card. Perhaps, a FAMAS membership card. What is even funny was the experience of BB's wife. She has a Filipina friend who donated used clothing and jacket to FAMAS. Her young son was in Cote des Neiges when he spotted that the jacket he had before was worn by a Filipino. He yelled, "That's mine." When the mother found out about this, she asked the guy wearing the jacket where he bought it. His response was, "I didn't buy this. It came from FAMAS." The mother was so infuriated that she marched to FAMAS and asked the person on duty there what happened to the jacket that she donated. No answer was given to her.

To help those in need is commendable. But we shouldn't be carried away. Let's check first the credibility of the person doing the fundraising and the organization receiving the donation. Most of all, we should tell the fundraiser to publish the names of donors and the amount of their donations like what the organizer of the Gazette Christmas Fundraising Drive is doing. Acknowledgement of receipt should also be published.

We should be more careful. Vigilant ■

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For Value, Avoid the Familiar

By David White

'Tis the season to party.

With 2014 just a few weeks away, holiday party season is in full swing. So hosts everywhere are assembling menus, fretting about guest lists, and blowing their budgets on decorations. Fortunately, selecting wines doesn't have to be stressful or expensive.

Just avoid the familiar. As New York University economics professor Karl Storchmann recently explained to Food & Wine, "[The market] adds a premium for certain places or grapes."

Consider Champagne.

Under European Union trade laws, wine can only be sold as "Champagne" if it comes from the Champagne region of France and is made in the "traditional method," which is a very expensive process. While real Champagne is a treat, it's expensive — even "budget" options cost upwards of \$35 per bottle.

Like Champagne, America's iconic wine regions are pricey. Napa Valley makes some exceptional Cabernet Sauvignon. But it's nearly impossible to

find a decent bottle for less than \$35. Sonoma County's Russian River Valley produces some lovely Chardonnay, but most cost \$25 or more. The list goes on. Trophy regions are almost always expensive.

Fortunately, the world is awash in affordable, great-tasting wine. As Storchmann explained, just as some regions come with a built-in surcharge, others come with a built-in discount. Finding such wines is as easy as opening up your palate to unheralded regions.

Daily Wine News: Inconsequential

"When you're worth just shy of \$4 billion, being cheated out of a couple of million dollars in a suspected wine fraud might seem inconsequential." In the New York Times, Mosi Secret reports on William Koch's testimony at Rudy Kurniawan's trial.

"Given what we've seen thus far, it's amazing they didn't try to arrange a plea before the trial started." Tyler Colman reports from day five of the trial.

Are New York sommeliers faddish drinkers, as Jancis Robinson recently suggested? Not according to Levi Dalton. He contends that "the underlying reality is phenomenal price escalation."

Eric Asimov offers some holiday wine suggestions for several possible types of gatherings.

"If I could rewind the past and read this book anew, I would treat it like a box of chocolates, to be sampled now and then over a couple of weeks." Douglas Hillstrom reviews Jon Bonné's The New California Wine.

Alfonso Cevola ponders the old and the new in California.

"If you can ease off the cork, you'll

preserve those precious bubbles that Dom Pérignon allegedly called 'drinking the stars.'" In Wine-Searcher, W. Blake Gray looks at "the science of bubbles."

"Everyone wanted to pet him," said Ms. Dixon, who trained Elvis to locate the various wine departments in Stew Leonard's in Norwalk." In the Wall Street Journal, Lettie Teague writes a wonderful profile of Amy Dixon, a blind sommelier and triathlete.

"The qualities that made her one of the most successful wine importers in the U.S. — decisiveness, determination and extreme efficiency (even if she did grind the gears a bit as she drove away) — were clear in those few frames." In a different piece, Teague profiles wine importer Martine Saunier.

Robert Joseph wonders if Chateau Lascombes' decision to sell its wines directly to consumers poses an existential threat to the négociant tradition.

In a separate post, Joseph contends that "Bordeaux may have to rethink the way it handles [the 2013] vintage."

Speaking of the 2013 vintage, "Robert Parker will not be publishing his report on Bordeaux 2013 until the end of June 2014, two months later than usual." Gavin Quinney has the details.

"If statistics are any guide, Bond would have died from alcohol- and tobacco-related diseases in his mid-fifties." An offbeat paper in the British Medical Journal studies James Bond. ■

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It's hobo theme party for SWIS and "soirée" for MMTV, Gilmore students and staff

by W. G. Quiambao

The bitter cold and heavy snow didn't deter the party goers from attending the Seniors of the West Island and Suburbs (SWISS) Hobo Christmas 2013 last Dec. 14 at St. Thomas A. Beckett Church Hall. Many guests came in sweaters and jeans, a few showed up dressed

The day after, Dec. 15, the staff of Gilmore College International, Mabuhay Montreal TV and The North American Filipino Star held a small but a happy Christmas Party at the Gilmore College International on Queen Mary Rd. Among the familiar faces seen were Amy Manon-og and husband, Ben Bote and



SWIS officers and members pose with their guest speaker, Mme Lysanne Blanchette Lamothe. SWIS president, Roger Ajero (3rd from the right), and Fely RI Carino, on the extreme right, master of ceremonies.

like hobos.

Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe, MP for Dollard des Ormeaux and Roxboro, graced the occasion. She was introduced by one of the two emcees, Vangie Salvador. Fely Rosales served as one of the emcees.

Everyone could fill the spirit of Christmas with the rendition of traditional songs like Silent Night and Joy to the World by the SWIS Glee Club conducted by Remy Aquino. The dance program was designed for the seniors who showcased their skill in dancing - from cha cha, boogie to tango.

Some of the highlights of the evening were the raffles, door prizes, You Think You can Dance and Best Hobo Man and Woman contests.

The party ended at 12 midnight with the singing of Auld Lang Synne participated by everyone.

Magnolia, Sofie Toledo and Michael Davantes, former columnist of the NAFS. After a one year stint in the Philippines, he writes again for the NAFS's Image & Fashion column.

It was a Pot Luck party and a variety of mouth-watering food was served - Pansit Malabon and Bihon (Filipino), Chicken Cacciatore, (Italian) and turkey (American). While enjoying the food, guests watched the initial presentation of the MMTV's first episode.

Everybody enjoyed the program like karaoke singing, dancing and musical chair. Gift certificates donated by Ben Bade were given to the winners of the games

A photo op of the whole MMTV crew took place with only one member missing as she was not aware of the party being held on this date. ■



Sitting down watching the game are from left: Irma Osano, Vilma Kelly, Vilma Garque, Desiree Fernando, and Juvy Vales, who came to Gilmore's party in spite of the snow storm.



Posing for a souvenir photo with the birthday celebrant, Sweet Amy Galamay (3rd from the left) are Irma Osano, Vilma Kelly, Remy Monteagudo and Zenaïda Kharroubi.



The best "Hobo" dressed member claims his prize while Fely Carino escorts him back to his seat.



Karaoke singing is a fun activity in any party. Terry White sings a Christmas carol and others also join her in a chorus. From left; Cristina Pa-ac, Terry White, Wimbledon Paraiso, Sophie Toledo, Zenaïda Kharroubi, and Remy Monteagudo.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers and advertisers



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