

THE NORTH AMERICAN FILIPINO STAR

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COP 28 Summit - Big oil versus science



Heads of state and government spoke at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Friday, Dec. 1, 2023 Credit: Sean Gallup/Getty Images

Dubai, Arab Emirates, Dec. 5, 2023
Five days into the two-week conference, known as COP28, the talks have become consumed by an intense debate over the future of fossil fuels.

The president of the event is under fire for having suggested that it is not necessary to phase out oil, gas and coal, the burning of which is dangerously heating the planet. At least 1,300 fossil fuels lobbyists, a record, are participating in the talks. And Saudi Arabia has said it opposes

any agreement that calls for an end to fossil fuels — significant because, under U.N. rules, any single country can scuttle a deal.

At the same time, scientists, activists and dozens of world leaders are growing more adamant in their calls for a rapid reduction in oil, gas and coal, arguing that, without a pivot away from fossil fuels, the planet is destined for catastrophe. Agreement on a phaseout would be historic; Past

See Page 8 COP 28

Montreal's opposition proposes to lower tax hike



Alan DeSousa, Ensemble Montreal opposition critic for finance. PHOTO BY JOHN MAHONEY /Montreal Gazette files

Montreal's opposition says it did the work for Mayor Valérie Plante's administration and is proposing amendments to the 2024 budget that would significantly reduce the planned hike in taxes.

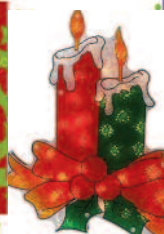
The Plante administration tabled its budget last month and it came with the highest property tax hike in 13 years, at 4.9 per cent.

But the opposition says it can get that hike down to 3.4 per cent. Speaking at city hall Wednesday, opposition finance spokesperson Alan

DeSousa said his Ensemble Montréal party is proposing a spending cut of \$54 million across all central city services, which would reduce the hike in property tax bills within the rate of inflation. He said Montrealers can't afford the tax hike Plante is proposing, and pointed out that it goes against an election promise she made to hold property tax increases to within the rate of inflation.

"The 4.9 per cent explosion in

See Page 13 Opposition proposes





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Anju.Dhillon@parl.gc.ca
(514) 639-4497

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Député / MP
Bourassa
Emmanuel.Dubourg@parl.gc.ca
(514) 323-1212

FAYÇAL EL-KHOURY

Député / MP
Laval — Les Îles
Faycal.El-Khoury@parl.gc.ca
(450) 689-4594

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Laurier — Sainte-Marie
Steven.Guilbeault@parl.gc.ca
(514) 522-1339

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Anthony.Housefather@parl.gc.ca
(514) 283-0171

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Emmanuella.Lambropoulos@parl.gc.ca
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(514) 363-0954

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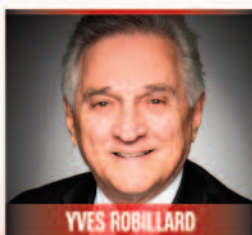
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Hochelaga
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(514) 283-2655

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

Scientific studies have proven that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Zenaïda Ferry Kharroubi

"It is more blessed to give than to receive" is a common expression during this gift giving season. But do all people believe this to be true or is it just an empty expression? Perhaps, it all depends on how one practices religion or if one is committed to apply biblical quotes in daily life. But it may seem surprising to know that there are scientific studies that proved that it is really more blessed to give than to receive. There's also a vast amount of scientific support for the benefits of generosity. As gift-giving ramps up amid the holiday season, those wondering how they end up spending so much might be interested to learn that generosity offers a wide range of

benefits — neurological, psychological and even evolutionary.

According to a neuroscientist, the brain has specific parts that had increased activity in the temporal parietal junction and ventral striatum, associated with empathy and happiness respectively. The connectivity between these two parts of the brain was modulated by the generosity that subjects showed in the experimental task," said Thorsten Kahnt, a co-author of a Nature Study. "And what's interesting is that the signal of the striatum itself was directly related to increases in happiness. Other studies have linked generous behaviors with activity in the reward

regions of the brain, such as the nucleus accumbens, and an increase in dopamine (the neurotransmitter involved in motivation and pleasure). Researchers have also found that behaving generously can trigger neural patterns similar to those triggered by parental behavior. This may seem intuitive, considering that generous actions often mirror the selfless behaviors required for childrearing."

Although the act of giving is rewarding to the brain, these brain connections take longer to develop which is why children and adolescents aren't quite as excited about giving as receiving, but most adults make the transition.

The evolutionary value of generosity, and the social bonds it strengthens, isn't limited to humans. The act of giving among animals is in the form of "nuptial gifts" to their potential mates which helps develop trust. Examples of this are penguins gifting rocks or male spiders who might give a "web-wrapped bug meal to a partner to tempt her not to eat him."

Generosity can help to develop platonic relationships as well, as some species give gifts to strengthen friendships; bonobos, for example, have been found to gift fruit

to potential new friends. Just as humans make mental notes of the behaviors of those around them, other animals develop keen awareness of who shares their supplies and who hoards it.

Not All Giving Is Equal - how one gives (and to whom) can, of course, impact how rewarding the experience is. Anyone who has felt moved to make a donation after hearing about a person's particular plight has experienced the "identifiable victim effect." This term describes our tendency to expend resources to help specific individuals rather than a general group — for example, giving more when shown an individual orphan rather than an anonymous silhouette, as a 2013 study demonstrated. The neuroscientists behind the study found that certain regions of the brain were activated when participants looked at another person's face, leading them to feel a greater sense of empathy and subsequent desire to help.

The above notes taken from a neuroscientist study just make the expression more meaningful and convince us that indeed it is more blessed to give than to receive. #



ALVIN DAHAN VELOSO, M. ED.
FAMAS President, 1971-72
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Whether it's Christmas, Holy Week, Santo Nino, Marian Devotions, Feast of Saints or other festivities, customs and traditions have always

Customs and Traditions, the Cornerstone of Liturgy Celebrations - A Revisit of Goals and Objectives of Notre Dame des Philippines

Christianity in the Philippines. Notre Dame des Philippines is no exception where the footprints of Spanish influences stand out. The preparation for Christmas starts in earnest with the Simbang gabi novena preceding Christmas, enlivened by the traditional caroling when the adult choir visit the host families accompanied by its pastor Father J.R. Cruz, MSP for a blessing.

Other religious festivities, such as The Salubong at Easter, the Holy Week traditions of Siete Palabras, All Souls Day, Santo Nino, the Marian devotions, and countless others, bear the trademark indisputably of a Hispano-Filipino legacy. Filipinos are eternally grateful for the gift of faith, traditions and customs and share the good tidings with other countries that had received the same blessings; mindful of course, of its profound



Auxiliary Bishop Alain Foubert flanked by Fr. Frank Alvarez, PME, and Fr. Rommel Cruz, MSP, the new pastor

Catholic hymn succinctly puts it. "Without the way, there is no going; without the truth, there is no knowing, and without life, there is no living."

The celebration of the 34th Anniversary of Notre Dame des Philippines should be an occasion for renewal and for new perspectives. As the modern era is unfolding with a new stewardship, board of administrators and a growing membership, a revisit of the structure and activities should help

guide the faithful navigate their spiritual journey. The Notre Dame des Philippines on Saint Laurent Boulevard and Cremazie, welcomes all with a warm Mabuhay, Bienvenue, Saludos and a gesture of "Tuloy Po Kayo" to a worship of faith, hope and love. The mission Church is a symbol of Filipino Catholic identity; a house of prayer for Filipino Catholics in the Metropolitan Region of Montreal and for others

See P. 18 Customs and Traditions



Bishop Alain Foubert of the Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal with Communion Ministers and Knights of Altar Servers

been the core of most celebrations. The centuries of Spanish influence, the indigenous and other cultures have always been a part of the evolution of

significance when the observance of the events is linked to the Living Christ of the Gospel as the Way, the Truth and Life. (John 14:6). As the quote from a



Mga balita at kuwento sa Tagalog

ni Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi

Ang pagdiriwang ng Pasko ng mga Pilipino kahit saang sulok ng mundo

Kahit gaano na katagal sa ibang bansa ang isang Pilipino, dala-dala pa rin niya ang ugaling Pilipino sa mga paghahanda para sa araw ng Pasko na isang araw na nagbubuklod sa mga pamilya. Mula sa paglalagay ng mga dekorasyon na parol sa bintana at paglalagay ng Christmas tree sa

maraming pagkaing Pilipino ang nakahanda sa lamesa kagaya ng lechon, pansit bihon, hamon, keso de bola, leche flan, fruit salad, bibingka, puto bumbong, at may kahalo ring ibang klase ng cake na tinatawag na Christmas log. Sa madali't salita, ang pagdiriwang ng Pasko ng mga Pilipino na nangibang bansa ay may halong ugaling banyaga na hindi maiwasan dahil sa kailangan din na makisama sa kanilang mga kaibigan na may iba't ibang lahi.

Bukod sa pagkain, ang



Iba't ibang hugis at kulay ng parol

paggawa ng dekorasyon para sa Pasko ay ang paggawa ng parol. Ito ay

tradisyong Pilipino na hindi nakakalimutan at ipinapasa sa mga kabataan. May mga negosyo rin na itinatayo para sa mg produktong gawa ng Pilipino dito at sa Pilipinas. Ang hindi pangkaraniwang halaman kagaya ng kalamansi at sampaguita ay itinitinda rin upang gawing pangregalo sa Pasko.

pagpapadala ng balik-bayan box, isang malaking kahon na pinupuno ng iba't ibang bagay - pagkain na de lata, kape at mga damit na pamasko nila sa mga kamag-anak sa Pilipinas na ipinadadala mula sa buan ng Oktubre o Nobyembre dahil inaabot ng 30 araw ang barko na nagdadala ng mga kahon.

Maraming mga salu-salo ang



Christmas caroling

Ang isa pang ugaling Pilipino ay ang pagbisita sa mga kaibigan upang kumanta ng Christmas carols. Karaniwang dahilan nito ay ang pagbibigay para sa mga asosyasyong pangkawanggawa (charitable organizations). Ang binibisitang bahay ay naghahanda rin ng merienda o mga pagkaing Pilipino bukod pa sa paghahanda ng perang ibibigay na kontribusyon. Nag-uumpisa ito sa buan ng Disyembre sa loob ng isang linggo, o ilang araw lang dahil mahirap din na maglibot sa mga bahay-bahay lalo na kung may maraming "snow" sa daan.

Hindi nakakalimut ang isang Pilipino sa kanyang pamilya at kaibigan na naiwan sa Pilipinas. Usong-uso ang

nangyayari at nag-uumpisa kahit Nobyembre pa lang. Sa karamihan ng mga organisasyong Pilipino, halos bawa't weekend, may nag-iimbata sa kanilang handaan. Mayroong handaan na may ibinibentang tiket, o kaya may handaan na tinatawag na "potluck" at kailangang magdala ng sariling luto na ambag para sa hapag ng mga pagkaing dala ng mga bisita.

Masayang talaga ang buan ng Nobyembre at Disyembre dahil sa pagkakataong makipagkita sa ating mga kaibigan at magbalitaan tungkol sa bagong apo, bagong trabaho at iba pang mga balitang tungkol sa mga nangyayari na nakakabagbag ng damdamin.

Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon sa inyong lahat. #

Montreal Non-Profits Extend Aid Opportunities for the Holiday Season

By Audrey Tougas, Local Journalism Initiative

Looking to contribute or receive assistance during the holiday season? Montreal, Quebec, hosts a variety of non-profit organizations where individuals can offer donations,

Deeks Insurance is currently matching donations made online to the Salvation Army Canada, doubling contributions up to \$100,000. The Salvation Army's impact includes providing 3.9 million people with meals, assisting 1.5 million people with



Collecte de rue from Guignoleemediasmtl on Youtube. Members about to collect donations for those in need. December 7, 2023.

volunteer their time, or seek support. The information provided below has been sourced directly from the respective organizations' websites.

Salvation Army Canada:

clothing, food, or aid, distributing food hampers and toys to 359,000 individuals during Christmas, and offering beds for 1.2 million people.

See Page 5 Montreal non-profits

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Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi
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The Crucible, a theatre production at John Abbott College.

By Audrey Tougas, Local Journalism Initiative

Casgrain Theatre opened its curtains on November 30th, 2023, showcasing the third-year students from John Abbott College in their performance of Arthur Miller's drama, "The Crucible." The week-long production, concluding on December 7th, transported the audience back to the Puritan village of Salem in 1692 during the infamous witch trials—a

Accused individuals faced a stark choice: falsely confess to witchcraft to spare their lives, or maintain their innocence and endure baseless tests, ultimately facing execution even when accused on unfounded grounds.

Penning by Arthur Miller in 1953 during the Second Red Scare, "The Crucible" sheds light on the pervasive fear instilled by McCarthyism. The term encapsulates McCarthy's tactics of sowing fear

them to blacklisting, ruining careers, and tarnishing reputations. This atmosphere of fear and hysteria, akin to that portrayed in "The Crucible," stifled free speech and coerced blind conformity.

As the curtain fell on the final performance, the audience erupted in cheers and accolades, acknowledging the commendable efforts of the performers in bringing this piece of history to life.

Coralie, a student from Cégep Montmorency, shared her enthusiasm for the production, describing it as a memorable experience. She praised the actors for their stellar performances and expressed intrigue in the

captivating narrative, saying, "C'était mémorable cette pièce. Les acteurs ont très bien performé et l'histoire était captivante," encapsulating the sentiment of many attendees.

The reenactment of "The Crucible" by John Abbott College students received praise and served as a cautionary tale, reminding the audience of the grim realities that arise when fear dictates truth and laws. The performance brought to life the historical and thematic depth of Miller's work, prompting reflection on the consequences of societal hysteria and the importance of vigilance against the manipulation of fear in any era. #



Picture from JacTheatreProductions on Instagram displaying the performers. December 8, 2023.

period characterized by mass hysteria and fear.

The play centers around John Proctor's stand against the church's witch hunts, ignited by young girls in Salem who unleashed a cascade of witchcraft accusations driven by betrayal, jealousy, fear, and vendettas.

among Americans during the Cold War, exploiting the prevailing anxiety about communism through anti-communist propaganda. McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee targeted those suspected of being communist spies or sympathizers, potentially subjecting

From Page 4 Montreal non-profits

Multiple programs are available in Montreal regions, including Rosemont, Ville-Émard, and Greenfield Park. For more information, contact them at 514-934-5615.

La Guignolée des Médias :

Accepting both monetary and physical donations, La Guignolée des Médias collection bins can be found at Provigo, Maxi, and Nissan Enterprises. In 2022, over 4.6 million dollars were distributed across Quebec, with around 630,000 distributed in the Montreal sector.

Moisson Montreal:

Moisson Montreal, a food bank distributing approximately \$1,249,000 worth of products annually, involves 303 community organizations on the island of Montreal and requires 40 daily volunteers. Donating \$1 to their organization translates to distributing around \$15 worth of food. For assistance and information on community kitchens or signing up for a Christmas basket, contact them at 514-344-4494.

La Guignolée of la Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul:

In select locations, this organization collects, sells, or donates

products at low costs, such as clothes in over 16 locations including Magasin Ste-Claire and Magasin Seconde Vie de Justin. In the previous year, approximately \$520,000 in donations were collected. Their Bonne Mine program also provides bursaries to students in financial need. For food assistance and information on locations, contact them at 514-526-5937.

Sun Youth:

Sun Youth, based in Montreal, distributed 19,000 Christmas baskets last year. The organization focuses on providing emergency services to families in need and promoting the physical, social, and intellectual development of youth through educational, sports, and recreational programs. Individuals in need of emergency food assistance can call the food bank line at (514) 842-1214, Monday to Friday, between 9 am and noon, or email services@jas-sy.org.

In summary, these are just a selection of the many charities operating in Montreal during the holiday season. For more detailed information, consult their respective websites or contact them through their designated phone numbers. #

Montreal marks the 34th anniversary of the Polytechnique Massacre

By Audrey Tougas, Local Journalism Initiative

On December 6, 2023, the city of Montreal paid tribute to the 14 women who lost their lives 34 years ago in the École Polytechnique massacre. At 5:10 pm, 14 beams of light illuminated Mont-Royal, marking the time shots were fired at Polytechnique in 1989. Each of the women's name was read out loud, proceeded with a moment of silence.

Angie Sweeney, a victim of domestic violence, attended the event to advocate for the adoption of Bill C-21. The proposed gun control legislation aims to freeze handguns, increase penalties for firearm trafficking, and ban assault-style firearms. While the bill received support from gun-control groups like PolySeSouvient, it faced opposition from conservatives and gun owners who argue it unfairly penalizes law-abiding citizens.



Picture by Graham Hughes of THE CANADIAN PRESS of Quebec Premier François Legault and his wife Isabelle Brais honoring the victims of the Polytechnique massacre. December 6, 2023.

The ceremony attracted Montrealers and visitors who came to honor the victims. The event served as a poignant reminder of the attack that claimed the lives of 14 innocent women and injured 13 others.

Notable attendees included Quebec Premier François Legault, wearing a white ribbon, who emphasized the significance of commemorating the events of 34 years ago. Premier Legault spoke about the importance of promoting equality between women and men. He commended Polytechnique for its increasing enrollment of female students, expressing hope for gender parity in the student body.

Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, also present and adorned with a white ribbon, spoke about the continuous need to address gender violence. He stressed the importance of ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of women, acknowledging that more work needs to be done.

Brian Sweeney, the father of

Maud Cohen, the first woman director of the Polytechnique engineering school, underlined the emotional significance of December 6 and addressed the importance of combating violence against women. Despite progress, Cohen acknowledged existing discrimination and stressed the need for more women in engineering to serve as role models.

A small ceremony at Polytechnique included the laying of flowers on a memorial plaque bearing the victims' names. Additionally, John Abbott College displayed a memorial table at the main entrance of the Anne-Marie-Edwards science building, one of the locations named after a victim of the December 6th massacre.

The commemoration serves as a powerful reminder of the victims and highlights the continual significance of nurturing a safe and inclusive environment for prospective engineers in educational institutions, as well as for all women throughout Quebec and Canada. #



ONTARIO Community News

By Tony A. San Juan
OCT-Retired

Filcan Business Chamber holds Executive Directorate induction

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Toronto(PCCT), a 32- year old organization of Filipino- Canadian business professionals, executives, and entrepreneurs in Ontario has officially inducted its 2023-2024 Board Directors and Executive Officers on October 28, 2023. With its theme, "Building an Innovative and Fruitful Future for Filipino-Canadian Businesses and Entrepreneurs Towards Community Development.", the event was held during its Gala Night & Induction Ceremony at the Rembrandt Banquet Hall in Scarborough, Toronto, Ontario.

Sworn in are Nestor Von Canton, President, Philip Beloso-VP for Government & Trade Relations, Lilac Cana- VP for Membership & Acting Secretary, Gisele Mirasol-VP for Public Relations, Steve Pagao-Treasurer, Rainier Macandog San Pascual-Auditor and the Members of the Board of Directors- Julian Baricuatro, Prescilla Cantos, Robeco Clarete, Beethoven Crasco, Cora Dela Cruz, Mark Gabriel, Bernard Garcia, Rommel Lumbao, and

Stephen Lecce, Hon. Minister of Seniors & MPP Raymond Cho, MPP for Scarborough Southwest Doly Begum, MP for Scarborough Centre Salma Zahid, MP for Vaughan Frank Sorbara, and Hon. Minister of Small Business and on video, MP for Mississauga Streetsville Rechie Valdez. Sam Ibrahim, CEO of Arrow Group of Companies and Jonathan Brindley, a CPA, CA and Alternative Funding Specialist, gave their respective inspirational messages.

The 5-hour evening program was jointly and ably hosted by Josie De Leon and Noah Aquino. Established singers Lilac Cana and Vianne Alexa rendered their much applauded ditties. Among those in enthusiastic attendance were Philippine Consul Mary Grace Villamayor, Consulate Cultural Officer Maricel Samonte, Manolo & Fe Arnaldo, Pidoy & Ting Pacis, Monina Serrano, Michele Serrano, Rolly Mangante, Oswald Tugadi, Mila Gabor, Zaldy Cuachon, Fred Yuson, Al Tupe, Sonny Martinez, Paulo Bucud, and a host of other community and business leaders.



MP for Scarborough Centre Salma Zahid (7th from the left) with PCCT Executive Officers & Directors. (Photo: Jose "Joey" Baking.)

Camilo Tayag, Jr. Media business entrepreneur Nestor Von Canton succeeded Steve Pagao, a professional accountant who served as President from 2015 to 2022, as PCCT head honcho. In his brief inaugural address, Prexy Von Canton expressed his appreciation to everyone, and stressed the importance of "true spirit of service ... for public & community improvement and pursuing meaningfully our mission and vision collectively for the future".

The Honourable Angelica C. Escalona, Philippine Consul General-Toronto, was the guest of honour and officiated the induction. Escalona warmly congratulated the new Executive Directorate and said that "the Philippine Consulate General is your steady partner and will support what will benefit everyone". Other distinguished guests who delivered their special addresses are Hon. Minister of Education & MPP

Those who covered for the media include Joey Baking, Theresa Redula, Raymond & Christine Santos, Tess De Jesus, and Tony A. San Juan.

Formed in 1991, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Toronto, is "a private, not-for-profit volunteer-driven business organization representing Filipino-Canadian businesses in various industries in the Greater Toronto Area and across Canada". The newly installed Board of Directors is rightly focusing to expand its membership base by enhancing its business networking outreach. As well, they are purposefully encouraging and enlisting more FilCan small business owners, operators, and entrepreneurs in Ontario to engage strategically within the competitive realms of efficient business planning, innovation, leadership, growth, and development for productive success. #

Filipino-Canadian teachers in Northern Ontario attend Indigenous Heritage seminar

Eleven Filipino-Canadian teachers in the North attended an Indigenous Seminar hosted by the North Caribou Lake Education Authority(NCLEA) on November 28, 2023 at Weagamow Lake, Kenora District, Ontario, Canada. The special session, a professional development event, was conducted with the theme: "Education: Building on the Future of the Nation". It was organized purposely to "provide a professional opportunity for Non-indigenous teaching staff to learn and understand further indigenous culture".

manager, and Katrina Rizaldo, the school nurse, also participated in the seminar-workshop.

The professional seminar focused on significant information about First Nation indigenous heritage, history, and culture. Specifically, the day-long workshop and orientation, delivered through presentations and participatory discussion, included interesting hands-on activities and exercises. The 6 salient topics covered are: 1. Community Building; 2. Perspectives and Demographics, 3. From the Past to Present and Into the Future; 4. world



Group photo of participants in the Indigenous Heritage Seminar

The whole day seminar-workshop was conducted by the North Caribou Lake Education Authority headed by the Education Director, Board of Directors, and Indigenous Leaders. The Filipino teachers and other participants were led by high school principal Richard Llanera of North Caribou Lake First Nation High School. Richard Llanera is the first secondary school principal in Northern Ontario of Filipino heritage.

In attendance were 11 Filipino descent educators and three other non-Filipino teachers. Among the educators who attended were Philippine-trained teachers Marisol Agaloos, Mirnalín Alforte, Christopher M. Banes, Ophelia Castanares, Sherwin Dela Pena, Herlene Johnson, Richard Llanera, Maripaz Madarang, Maria Divina Melo, Elsa Rey, and Mae Sajorne, and the non-Filipino educators were Shalini Choudhary, Rekha Kirtee, and Orlando Richards. Two other non-teaching staff, namely Anil Kumar, the school website

views; 5. Building Meaningful Relationships; and 6. Anchoring Education.

All the participants considered that the event was certainly a highly productive meeting and great learning experience for them. As new and experienced teachers, the attendees are looking forward to employing effectively their new-found valuable knowledge and information in carrying out their professional tasks and responsibilities in First Nation schools in Ontario. #

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Literary Corner

Pedro Guidote



Four Contemporary Senryus and One Tanka

{Senryu, also called human haiku, is a three-line Japanese poetic form structurally similar to haiku (5-7-5 syllables); whereas, the tanka is a 31-syllable poem traditionally written in a single unbroken line and is better known in its five-line 5-7-5-7-7 syllable count form.)

Birds and bees can do
simple multiplication
so smart as rabbits.

•

Black holes, galaxies
hurtling stranded in deep space.
Crash! One more big bang!

•

Covid-19 bug
contagious spirillum
small, but terrible.

•

Hello to Christmas
bid 'bye to grief, misfortune
live well, be happy.

•

Months-long forest fires
blocked sky's Magi's Christmas star
but thanks, GPS,
we, techie Kings, shall plough through
troubled roads to Bethlehem.

Canada supports UN resolution calling for ceasefire in Israel-Hamas war

Canada has voted in favour of a non-binding United Nations resolution that calls for an "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" in the Israel-Hamas war.

"From the very beginning we have said that Israel has the right to defend itself," Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly told reporters before the vote on Tuesday. "How Israel defends itself matters."

The resolution passed the UN General Assembly with 153 votes in favour, 10 against and 23 abstentions. The vote followed the United States' decision on Friday to veto a resolution at the UN Security Council that called for an "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" in Gaza.

The Gaza health authority — which is controlled by Hamas, a listed terrorist entity in Canada — reported Monday that more than 18,200 Gazans have been killed since Oct. 7.

As the number of deaths mount in Gaza, Canada decided to change its long-standing support for Israel and call for a ceasefire between it and Hamas. That decision has brought criticism from many corners — including some Liberal MPs — while others say it's a good first step.

"What is unfolding before our eyes will only enhance the cycle of violence. This will not lead to the durable defeat of Hamas," Joly said Tuesday.

Canada's vote represents a shift away from its longstanding practice of voting with Israel on major resolutions at the UN.

At least two Liberal MPs have disagreed publicly with their government's vote at the UN. Quebec MP Anthony Housefather, who is Jewish, said any ceasefire must start with Hamas releasing hostages.

Joly said Canada remains supportive of a two-state solution. "We need to make sure that we have the conversation to be able to get to a Palestinian state next to an Israeli state that are able to live side by side in peace and security," she said.

Earlier Tuesday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau joined allies in calling for "efforts towards a sustainable ceasefire" in the Israel-Hamas war — the first time the government of Canada had officially used the word "ceasefire" in relation to the conflict.

Trudeau and the prime ministers of Australia and New Zealand issued a joint statement earlier Tuesday calling for



Israeli soldiers operate with a tank at the Shajaiya district of Gaza city amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in the Gaza Strip December 8, 2023. (Yossi Zeliger/Reuters)

the resumption of the seven-day pause in fighting that ended earlier this month. All three countries voted in favour of Tuesday's UN resolution.

"The recent pause in hostilities allowed for the release of more than 100 hostages and supported an increase in humanitarian access to affected civilians," the statement said.

"We want to see this pause resumed and support urgent international efforts towards a sustainable ceasefire."

Trudeau told reporters Tuesday afternoon that he had just outlined Canada's position in a "long and detailed" phone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"We are committed to working with partners in the region and around the world towards an enduring two-state solution," Trudeau told reporters. "Canada is committed to ensuring that Israelis and Palestinians get to live in peace and security within internationally recognized borders in peaceful and successful states."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says Canada is committed to 'peace and security' for Israelis and Palestinians as the government issued a statement along with New Zealand and Australia on Tuesday calling for efforts toward a 'sustainable ceasefire' in the Israel-Hamas war.

The joint statement with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon marks the first time Trudeau has used the term "ceasefire" in reference to the Israel-Hamas war. He previously called for a

humanitarian pause in the conflict.

"This cannot be one-sided. Hamas must release all hostages, stop using Palestinian civilians as human shields, and lay down its arms," the statement said.

The statement also said there is no role for Hamas in the future governance of Gaza. The three leaders say they support Palestinians' right to self-determination and oppose the forcible displacement of Palestinians from Gaza.

Their statement also affirms Israel's right to exist, condemns Hamas's Oct. 7 attack on Israel — which killed about 1,200 people, according to Israeli officials — and demands that Hamas release all remaining hostages.

"We recommit ourselves to working with partners toward a just and enduring peace in the form of a two-state solution, where Israelis and Palestinians can live securely within internationally recognized borders," the prime ministers said.

The statement comes on the same day U.S. President Joe Biden issued his sharpest rebuke yet of Israel's conduct in the war while speaking to Democratic donors in Washington.

"This is the most conservative government in Israel's history," Biden said, adding that the government "doesn't want a two-state solution."

Israel is starting to lose support around the world, Biden added, arguing that Netanyahu "has to strengthen and change" the Israeli government to find a long-term solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. # CBC Dec. 13/23

Canadian Dental Care Plan

The Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) will help ease financial barriers to accessing oral health care for eligible Canadian residents with an annual adjusted family net income of less than \$90,000 who do not have access to dental insurance.

Applications will open in phases.

If you're a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 12 and do not have access to dental insurance, you may already be eligible for the Canada Dental Benefit. This benefit is available until June 30, 2024.

You may be eligible to apply for the new Canadian Dental Care Plan. If you are over 70 years old, you may receive a letter by March 2024 with instructions on how to apply. #

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PERSONALITY

OF THE MONTH

Jarred Martin Clarianes

By Fely Rosales-Cariño



I have the pleasure of introducing a successful young man - Jarred Martin Clarianes. Jarred was born in Talisay City, Negros Occidental, Philippines on August 3, 1988. His parents are Rizaldy (deceased) and Rowena (an overseas foreign worker of almost 25 years) and has two siblings Steffany Rae and Keziah Kim. His wife Filamy Rose, a registered nurse in the Philippines, currently works in the public sector in Montreal. Their pride and joy is their 2-year old daughter, Garbrielle Rose.

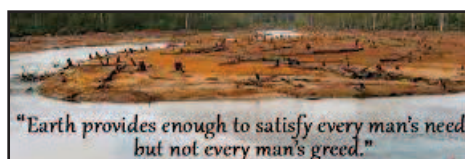
I learned that from the time Jarred started his schooling, he has sailed in deep waters without any

difficulty. He attended their barrio's Doc Hermanas Elementary school in his hometown and emerged as class salutatorian (2001). His high school years was spent at the University of Negro Occidental in Recoletas de Talisay, graduating as class valedictorian (2005). He spent college at the University of St. La Salle, Bacolod City. He completed his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and received a magnificent distinction, having the words Cum Laude printed in his diploma (2009). What an intelligent, top-achieving personality we have on our roster this month! Congratulations, Jarred!

talks, came under fire for saying there is "no science" behind the idea that fossil fuels must be phased out in order to keep average global temperatures from rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels.

That's the threshold beyond which scientists say humans will struggle to adapt to increasingly severe storms, heat, drought and fire. The planet has already warmed by about 1.2 degrees Celsius.

The talks in Dubai have highlighted deep international divisions over the future role of oil, gas and coal that are complicating efforts by nearly 200 countries to hash out an agreement before the summit's scheduled end on Dec. 12. #



Looking at his professional profile, an excerpt from his curriculum vitae reveals a "highly driven and passionate individual who has consistently moved up the career ladder" through an excellent work ethic, earning trust from superiors and colleagues. He also has "more than 10 years of experience in public policy and administration and project management" both in the public and private sectors.

As for jobs held, Jarred continues to impress. In 2011 he was involved with the local government of Talisay City and by 2014-2016 was Executive Assistant to the City Mayor. He was also with Global Medical Technologies Manila in 2016-2018 as Coordinator/ Manager. His leadership skills served him well and from 2018-2021 was Policy and Program Manager in the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP). In this position, he was "the focal person for policies and programs of the organization helping ensure that local government positions ... are strategically communicated ... to the Executive Branch, including the Office of the President, the Philippine Senate and Congress." What an imposing job!

I would like to highlight one of the policy papers he drafted that was "cited by no less than the former Senate President Vicente Sotto III himself on the floor of the Senate" during one of the sessions. Please go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=5165&v=tJTYVEGyleE&feature=youtu.be> to access the official Senate video.

As the COVID -19 pandemic started in the Philippines, ULAP under Jarred's watch supported the government by keeping them informed of regularly evolving guidelines as well as formulating an appropriate Covid-19 response.

Now the scene changes to Quebec. Since 2021 to present, he is employed by the English Montreal School Board (EMSB), the largest English public school board in Quebec, as the Administration officer

in the Material Resources Department responsible for budgeting and expense analysis.

Jarred, I earnestly salute you in these mammoth tasks. Your tenacity and consistency ring loud and clear in everything you do.

There's more. Civic-minded Jarred is also highly engaged with various Filipino community associations. In his capacity as Director for External Affairs of the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM), he initiated the promotion of the Filipino Heritage Month in Quebec. He also helps to coordinate information with the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa.

Other associations where you can find Jarred is in the Kahirup Association of Quebec (member), St. John Brebeuf Parish (lector), Philippine Red Cross (volunteer) and Philippine Political Science Association (member).

When asked about his future plans, he said "my wife and I will continue pursuing our own respective careers in the public or non profit sectors which we consider as our own contribution in our own little ways, in the continuous effort to build a stronger, safer and better society." Not many can say this. Wow! Generous and benevolent to a fault!

In conclusion, this very personable, highly educated, consummate professional said this when asked what motto he lives by, quoting Mahatma Ghandi: "Live as if you are to die tomorrow, learn as if you were to live forever." Jarred, you make your fellow Filipinos proud. You set a high standard to follow; no doubt you make big footprints! I pray that you will continue to have a work ethic that pleases God. And "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (Colossians 3:23-24). God Bless You!

From Page 1

COP28

U.N. climate deals have shied away from even including the words "fossil fuels."



Against this backdrop, negotiators from more than 170 countries are frantically working to hash out an agreement that can be approved by every nation by next Tuesday.

"The COP presidency has brought baggage to this process, and far too many oil lobbyists," said Tzeporah Berman, a Canadian activist who is chairwoman of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative. "He has also brought a chance for a real conversation on how to phase out fossil fuels."

Tensions over the decision to hold the event in the Emirates have swirled for months and burst into view on Monday, when Sultan Al Jaber, the oil executive presiding over the climate



Greetings from the officers and members of the Federation of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec (FFCAQ). Luzviminda Mazzone, President, is 5th from the left, front row.





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Best wishes to you and your family for a safe and happy holiday season. May this joyous season be full of light, laughter, and happiness for all.

Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon!



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Gilmore College International students wearing their uniforms during a French written exam



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Souvenir photo of guests at the 90th birthday party for the “Godfather” Bert Abiera held on Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023 at CDRC 6767 Cote des Neiges



The birthday celebrant, Bert Abiera (5th from the left) poses with guests during his 90th birthday party on Saturday, November 25, 2023.





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Embutido (Filipino meat loaf)

INGREDIENTS

1 pound ground pork
2 pieces raw egg
¼ cup flour
1 cup breadcrumbs or 3 pieces sliced bread cut into really small pieces
1 big carrot - diced (small)
1 big onion - diced (small)
1 medium green bell pepper - diced (small)
cup sweet pickle relish
3 tablespoons tomato sauce or ketchup
1 cup raisins
1-2 teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoons pepper
6 pieces Vienna sausage or 3 hotdogs
2 hard-boiled eggs - each cut into 4

INSTRUCTIONS:

Put all ingredients, except the last 2, in a large bowl. Mix everything together using your hand to make sure that all is well incorporated. Set aside. Cut 2 pieces of aluminum foil about 12 inches long each. Take half of the meat mixture and flatten it on of the foil, covering about a half. Don't forget to leave some space at the ends, about 2 inches each side. Place the sausages and hard boiled eggs on the middle of the flattened meat. Roll the foil so that the meat forms a cylinder or log, locking the sausage and egg in the center. Twist the ends of the foil to lock. Steam for 50-60 minutes. Place inside the refrigerator until temperature turns cold Slice and serve. Share and Enjoy!



Pork Menudo

Ingredients

2 lbs. pork
1/4 lb. pig liver
1 cup potatoes diced
1 piece carrot cubed
1/2 cup soy sauce
1/2 piece lemon
1 piece onion chopped
3 cloves garlic minced
1 teaspoon sugar
3/4 cup tomato sauce
1 cup water
4 pieces hotdogs sliced diagonally
2 tablespoons cooking oil
2 to 3 pieces dried bay leaves
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

Combine pork, soysauce, and lemon in a bowl. Marinate for at least 1 hour. Heat oil in a pan. Saute garlic and onion. Add the marinated pork. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes. Pour in tomato sauce and water and then add the bay leaves. Let boil and simmer for 30 minutes to an hour depending on the toughness of the pork. Note: Add water as necessary. Add-in the liver and hot dogs. Cook for 5 minutes. Put-in potatoes, carrots, sugar, salt, and pepper. Stir and cook for 8 to 12 minutes. Serve. Share and enjoy!



Paella Marinera (Seafood with yellow rice)

Ingredients

2 lbs seasoned yellow rice arroz amarillo
1 lb mussels tahong
1/2 lb squid cleaned
1 lb clams almejas, cooked

8 crabs cleaned
1 lb shrimp cleaned
43 ounces tomato sauce
A hint of Tabasco sauce
3/4 cup pimienta sliced
3 onions diced
1 head garlic minced
1/2 teaspoon saffron
3 to 4 cups water
1/4 cup olive oil
salt and ground black pepper to taste

Instructions

Combine seasoned yellow rice and water and soak for 3 hours. Heat a Paellera or large pan then pour-in olive oil. When the oil is hot, saute the garlic and onions. Put-in the crabs, mussels, shrimps, clams, squid, Tabasco sauce, salt, and ground black pepper. Cover the pan and cook for 3 minutes or until the juices come out. Add tomato sauce then cover the pan. Cook for a minute. Stir then simmer for 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer the cooked seafoods on a clean plate. With the remaining juices and tomato sauce on the pan, put-in the rice soaked in water and stir well. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add the Spanish saffron then gently stir. Cover the pan and continue cooking in low heat until the rice are done. Top the cooked yellow rice with pimienta then arrange the cooked seafoods over it. Serve with some lemon or lime wedges. Share and enjoy!



Chinese ships fire water cannons on Philippine resupply vessels in South China Sea. Photo provided by the Philippine Coast Guard

The Chinese coast guard assaulted three Philippine vessels with water cannon blasts Sunday and rammed one of them, causing serious engine damage off a disputed shoal in the South China Sea just a day after similar hostilities at another shoal, the Philippine coast guard said. The latest confrontation

happened near Second Thomas Shoal as two Philippine navy-operated supply boats and Philippine coast guard escort ships were en route to deliver food and other supplies to Filipino forces in a long-marooned navy ship that serves as a territorial outpost, said a coast guard spokesman, Commodore Jay Tarriela. # (Associated Press) Dec. 10, 2023



The Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ) is striking for the third time this year, demanding better salaries and work conditions.

Public sector strikes are ramping up again this week, and now 80,000 nurses and health professionals are joining the hundreds of thousands who are already on strike. Nurses join the common front, or Front commun in French, and the

Fédération autonome de l'enseignement teachers' union on the picket lines. FIQ spokesperson Roberto Bomba thinks Quebecers understand the need for the strike and will stand with the nurses. # Excerpt from CBC News, Dec. 11/23



Social Tidbits

Montreal Community News

Fely Rosales Cariño

Joy To The World, my Social Tidbits readers! Can you say It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year for you? Hope you've been good for goodness' sake. And yes, the long expected winter has come, courtesy of piles of snow and the temperature dipping a little bit lower. Why, this week was the first time I used my winter coat and boots. And if you go around at night, you will see Christmas lights adorning many windows, lawns, and driveways. I appreciate those with an artistic bent, some showing nativity scenes. Couldn't you just imagine Hark, the Herald Angels Sing!

The Candon City and Suburbs Association of Montreal (CCSAM) celebrated their 21st Anniversary on November 4, 2023 at the Olympia Hall of Casa Grecque in DDO. I admire their President Julius Abad, together with his lovely wife, in setting a wonderful example to his fellow officers in taking care of welcoming the guests. I originally thought that the entrance fee of 75\$ might yield a low turnout, but I stand happily corrected! On the contrary, the hall was packed!

The programme began with the National Anthems and then the Invocation by Sir Rey Balansi. Mr. President Julius Abad gave the Welcome Address and also introduced the Guest Speaker of the evening, Miss Stephanie Valenzuela (City Councilor, Darlington District). Dinner and dance followed. As expected, line dancing was the dance choice of the evening.

After dinner came the presentation of officers: Julius Abad (President), Joselito Oasan (Vice President), Geneveve Balino (Secretary), Josie Oasan (Treasurer), Tessie Dolormente (Asst-Treasurer), Rhoda Bang-Asan (Auditor), Felly Balles (Business Manager), Reuben Mendoza (PRO), and Oliver Aspacio (PRO).

And here are the Board of Directors: Vito Galdones, Jacqueline Galdones, Joy Collado, Arnold Galicia, Fely Abaya, John David, Angie Borja, Nino Galdones, Robert Suni, Virginia Abaya, Jun Estepa, Lito Villalobos, Lorenzo Casem, and Marilyn Mendoza. Let's also give courtesy to the past Presidents who now serve as Advisers: Eloy Galdones, Felimon Dolormente, Dolores Cacusana, Flora Lim, Rey Abaya and Rene Gagarin.

Now, I want to turn the spotlight to a very well-known leader in the Filipino community and give him a big fat Thank You/Salamat/ Merci/ Dios Ti Ag-ngina !!! If you want to guess who he is, I'll tell you, he is none other than the one and only Sir James de la Paz, popularly known as the Elvis of Montreal! One Can't Help Falling in Love with his endearing imitation of Elvis' songs.



Julius Abad, President. Candon City and Suburbs Association of Montreal

Indeed, time has not dimmed his renditions – you will be All Shook Up!!! Such was my sentiment when Sir Julius came to my seat to present me to Sir James who sang Elvis' Fools Rush In – dedicated to me as a thank you for my service to the Filipino community. Easily the sweetest serenade of my life! For those who heard him, you will not be Lonesome Tonight! I can't thank you enough Sir James for that magnanimous gesture. You are my singing hero.

Now President Julius and his team should be congratulated for a very successful and well attended party. He also entertained the crowd with several songs. This singing president will wow you! What an impressive crooner! Thank you Sir Julius! And special acknowledgment goes to Emcee Felipa Balles and DJ John, JBL Legend.

Last November 11, 2023, the Catholic Women's League (CWL) held their 10th Anniversary at St. Kevin Parish (SKP) Hall on 5600 CDN, Montreal. The Opening of the Party was started by the Line Dancers, followed by the National Anthems. Then Fr. Andrew Thuraisingam delivered the Invocation/Opening Prayer/Blessing of Food. Merle Valiente, CWL President, then welcomed the guests. Alice Rojas, CWL Founding President, gave a brief history of CWL, SKP Council 4030. Fr. Jesse Dimafilis,

CWL Founding Priest, provided the Inspirational Message of the evening.

After dinner, 14 CWL Founding Members were recognized in the Awarding of Pins by Fr. Andrew Thuraisingam, Lydia Fielding (past President, CWL Montreal Diocese), and Rebecca Losloso (Council Organization Chairman). Then came the highlight of the evening, the Presentation of the new CWL officers: Merle Valiente (President), Rebecca Losloso (Vice President and Org. Chairman), Warlina Basbacio (Secretary), Amelia San Juan (Treasurer), Jeanie Capulong (Faith Chairman), Alicia Rojas (Service Chairman), Lourdes Uy (Justice Chairman) and Fr. Andrew Thuraisingam. (Spiritual Advisor). The association's motto is "Catholic and Living It" and its mission is "to grow in faith and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service."

Now let's hear it for the Knights of Rizal (KOR), Snowdon Chapter, who held their 1st Year Anniversary on November 18, 2023 at 6767 Côte-des-Neiges Community Center. The evening began with the Entrance of Colors. Flag bearers were Sir Norberto Mandin, KOR (Philippine flag), Sir John Wesley Estioco, KCR, LM, Chancellor (Canadian flag), and Sir Alain John Charboneau, KR (Quebec flag). The Philippine National Anthem was performed by Sir Edmour Valdez (KGOR, LM, ECR Auditor) and O Canada by Sir Julius

Abad (KCR, LM, Area 2 Commander).

Invocation was performed by Sir Rey Balansi (KGOR, LM, ECR Pursuivant), the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Sir John Wesley Estioco and Welcome Remarks was by Sir Reymund Lastra (KCR, LM, Chapter Commander).

There was also a message from Sir Dario Boco (KGR, LM, ECR Region Commander). Sir Gerry C. Danzil (KGOR, LM, Area 1 Commander) presented some of the Executive Board. Here they are: Sir Raymund Lastra (Chapter Commander), Sir John Wesley Estioco, Sir Norberto Mandin (Pursuivant), Micola Abad (Exequer), and Sir Mark Estrada (Auditor). A Special shout out to Master of Ceremonies Sir James Allan De La Paz, KGOR, LM, ECR, Chancellor.

By press time, you will no doubt be celebrating Christmas. Would you be on the naughty list or the nice list? In the midst of the hoopla of this festive season, do you have room for Jesus in the inn of your heart? Let's not forget the reason for the season, Jesus Christ. Isaiah 9:6 says, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." I wish you Shalom!

Until next issue and God bless!

From Page 1 Opposition proposes

residential taxes exceeds both the actual inflation in 2023 and the projected inflation for 2024," DeSousa said. "This is all caused by the terrible management of Projet Montréal, who spends like there is no tomorrow.

"We're offering the administration a way out from the corner in which they painted themselves with this huge increase."

He said the \$54-million reduction represents just 1.6 per cent of the budgets already allocated to central city services.

"We would be asking the centre city services that already have bloated budgets to tighten their belts," DeSousa said.

In addition to proposing a spending cut, Ensemble Montréal's amendments call for the city to double the amount spent on homelessness and the community groups that work with the unhoused to \$12 million. The 2024 budget calls for a \$500,000 increase in that allocation.

Plante administration defends budget

The Plante administration admitted its 2024 budget asks

Montrealers to "make an effort" during difficult times, but defended its 4.9-per-cent tax increase.

Speaking to reporters at city hall just prior to a city council meeting to vote on the budget, executive committee vice-president Benoit Dorais said the budget comes at the end of a difficult year for the city, as inflation has caused city expenses to skyrocket. At the same time, it has \$40 million less revenue coming in from land-transfer taxes because of a dip in sales this year.

However, Dorais didn't explain how the budget respects the inflation rate, as the inflation rate observed by Statistics Canada has been consistently below 4.9 per cent since April. In September, inflation grew by just 3.7 per cent.

"We're basing it on the observed inflation rate, and the increase is below that rate," Dorais said, without specifying the inflation rate the city has based its budget on.

Dorais also threw water on a recommendation by the opposition to ask the city's central services to cut their budget by a total of \$54 million to reduce the overall tax increase to 3.4 per cent. # Source: Excerpt from Montreal Gazette news.

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FILIPINO STAR SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Anne Curtis immortalized as Madame Tussauds Hong Kong's newest Filipino wax figure



Anne Curtis

Actress Anne Curtis is set to have her very own wax figure at Madame Tussauds Hong Kong.

Anne's figure will be placed in the Hong Kong Glamour Zone alongside notable Hollywood stars like Nicole Kidman, Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Robert Pattinson, and Chris Hemsworth.

The figure will feature Anne in "an iconic and familiar pose" that will entice visitors to interact with it.

Sculptors from the UK have begun working on the figure and are eyeing the end of 2024 for the launch of the finished product.

"Coming to the sitting, I thought [they'd] be plastering my whole body and I had to stay completely still and lay down like a mummy...but it turned out to be so easy! I

only had to stay still while they [took] 360 degree photos and measurements of me. The skill [they] used to measure me was so impressive," Anne said.

"I cannot believe this is

happening. So thrilled to share that I will be joining [Madame Tussauds Hong Kong]. Another dream ANNE-locked!" Anne wrote in an Instagram post.

Anne marked her 25th



anniversary in showbiz this year. She is a regular host on the ABS-CBN noontime show It's Showtime. She went on an acting hiatus when she got pregnant with her daughter Dahlia, but is set to make a big-screen comeback through an Erik Matti-directed film.

The 38-year-old multimedia star will also be holding her two-day concert LUV-ANNE!: The Comeback in California on December 1 and 2.



Outside of the entertainment industry, Anne is a UNICEF Philippines National Ambassador, and has made significant contributions to the agency even before her appointment.

Other Filipinos who have their own wax figures in the famed Madame Tussauds museums include Miss Universe 2015 Pia Wurtzbach and boxer-turned-politician Manny Pacquiao, whose figures are also displayed in Hong Kong, and Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray, whose figure is displayed in Singapore. ■

Vic Sotto panics when quake strikes while his wife, daughter ride the Ferris wheel in Tagaytay



Vic Sotto with wife Paulene Luna and their daughter Tali

Bossing Vic Sotto admitted that he panicked when the earthquake struck while his wife and daughter rode the Ferris wheel in Tagaytay last Dec. 6.

During an interview at TV5 in Mandaluyong City on Dec. 6, Vic shared what happened to his wife Pauleen Luna and daughter Tali when he was asked about the Intellectual Property Office's decision to officially recognize him, Tito Sotto, and Joey De Leon (also known as TVJ) as the creators of the popular noontime show "Eat Bulaga."

"Throughout the day, magulo isip ko dahil lumindol at yung mag-ina ko nakasakay sa Ferris wheel sa

Tagaytay noong lumilindol. Akala ni Pauleen Luna na yung ferris wheel kasi yung upuan iba ang galaw.

(Throughout the day, my mind was confused because there was an earthquake and my wife and daughter were riding the Ferris wheel in Tagaytay. Pauleen Luna thought it was the Ferris wheel because the seat was moving differently.)

"As the day went on, nag-Christmas party kami at doon pa lamang sa akin nag-sink in. Mukhang mabait naman ang tadhana sa aming tatlo at sa lahat ng dabarkads kaya malaking pasasalamat," Vic added.

(As the day went on, we had a Christmas party and

it just sunk in for me. It seems that fate is kind to the three of us and to all the dabarkads, so a big thank you.)

On Dec. 5, people evacuated buildings in some parts of Metro Manila after an earthquake

measuring 5.9 on the Richter Scale hit Luzon.

Experts did not expect damage, but warned of aftershocks. Zamora ended.

Kathryn Bernardo now most followed PH celeb on Instagram



Kathryn Bernardo (left) & Anne Curtis

Kapamilya actress Kathryn Bernardo is now the most followed Filipino celebrity on photo-sharing app Instagram.

As of writing, Bernardo has 20,138,289 followers on the photo-sharing app, surpassing fellow Kapamilya star Anne Curtis with 20,136,112 followers.

Bernardo recently made headlines after she and actor Daniel Padilla confirmed their breakup through social media post on November 30.

Bernardo began her

career as a child actress with roles in series like "It Might Be You," "Endless Love," "Magkaribal," among others. She rose to fame with the remake of "Mara Clara" along with Julia Montes.

The actress will later on be partnered to Padilla and appear on several series and movies together. Their breakup announcement, which ended their 11-year relationship, saddened and shocked not only their fans but also their friends and fellow celebrities. ■

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.15*

Michelle Dee cherishes post-Miss Universe triumph

Beauty queen Michelle Marquez Dee may not have brought home the crown from Miss Universe 2023, but she undoubtedly gained a wealth of experiences and connections that will last a lifetime.

"Looking back, with how hands-on I was in every single detail, from the smallest elements to the execution of the onstage plan, my team and I meticulously planned everything, and honestly, I wouldn't want to change anything. I don't know what I could have changed. I have so much respect for my creative team. I wouldn't change anything because I gave my 200 percent to the competition," Michelle told Manila Standard Entertainment.

In a homecoming press conference, Michelle shared her key takeaways from the prestigious pageant, emphasizing the friendships she forged and the gratitude she felt for the support she received.

"Honestly, it's the relationships I was able to build. This was my second international pageant, so my biggest takeaway is that you meet many people who share the same passion and purpose to create a better world," she said.

The 28-year-old model and

actress highlighted the strong bonds she developed with her fellow Miss Universe contestants, particularly Miss Nicaragua Sheynnis Palacios, Miss Mexico Melissa Flores, and her roommate, Miss Indonesia Fabienne

Michelle described their initial lack of interaction due to competition assignments but emphasized their intention to showcase their friendship to the world.

"Anntonia and I, we weren't able to converse so much during

bad blood between them, contrary to several contents circulating online during the height of the pageant.

"Medyo nagka-away away na 'yung fans," Michelle said. "And our intention with our very first photo was really to show that we're on good terms. If the two of us are on good terms, then our fans really should unite as well or at least be more respectful towards each other."

Michelle also revealed plans to visit Anntonia in Thailand and expressed her eagerness to witness Anntonia's crown turnover.

"I'll fly to Thailand for Anntonia's crown turnover, and she'll also visit the Philippines when it's my time to relinquish my crown," she revealed.

Since her return to the Philippines, Michelle has been busy expressing her gratitude to her supporters and embracing the opportunities that have come her way. She appeared on various TV shows and attended numerous media interviews.

For her TV comeback, Michelle will be part of Black Rider, which stars Ruru Madrid and Yassi Pressman.

"I'm going to be part of the series' extended season," she said. ■



Michelle (left) gets support from her brother, Abraham Lawyer

Groeneveld.

Michelle's friendship with Miss Universe Thailand, Anntonia Porsild, captured the hearts of pageant fans worldwide. Their journey from "rivals" to close friends became a testament to the power of unity and understanding.

the start of the competition because we didn't have a chance since we were assigned to different areas," she said.

She added that the intention of her first-ever photo with the Thai beauty queen was to show their fans that there was no

Marian Rivera elated by reconciliation with Heart Evangelista

Marian Rivera opted to keep the details of her reconciliation with Heart Evangelista private, although she was elated that she and the actress-fashion icon are finally on good terms.

Rivera and Evangelista were snapped hugging and greeting each other during the 84th birthday party of GMA top honcho Felipe L. Gozon. Snippets of their interaction were posted by eventologist Tim Yap on his Instagram account.

When asked about her recent interaction with Evangelista on the sidelines of the Tiktok Creators Night last Dec. 10, Rivera chose to keep what they talked about just between them.

"Secret," she told reporters while laughing. "Nag-catch up lang kami ng mga kwentuhan and happy ako na nagkita kami (We just caught up

that we met during that time). Finally!"

Meanwhile, in a separate event, the "Marimar" star pointed out that she doesn't want to

with Evangelista but she is nonetheless happy that they're okay.

"Well, tulad ng sinasabi ko, ayoko nang i-elaborate basta masaya ako na maayos kaming dalawa (Well, just like what I said, I don't want to elaborate on the details. But I'm happy that we're both on good terms)," she said.

During a 24 Oras interview last Nov. 29, Evangelista revealed that it was Rivera who initiated their reconciliation by reaching out to their mutual friends.

The Kapuso actresses made headlines after following each other on Instagram after their longstanding feud in 2011.



with each other and I'm happy elaborate on her reconciliation

'My love life isn't a priority': Kris Aquino breaks up with Mark Leviste anew

In celebration of their favorite holiday, these stars went all out with their Christmas tree decorations. The holiday season is coming in full swing! From the twinkling lights and colorful parols, the Christmas Tree decorations remain the

Toni Gonzaga

Actress-host Toni Gonzaga-Soriano took on the White Christmas theme decoration. On Instagram, Toni uploaded a photo of her whimsical Christmas tree made by Randy Lazaro. The

season's star.

In celebration of their favorite holiday, these stars went all out with their Christmas tree decorations.

Here's a sneak peek of some elegant celebrity Christmas tree decorations:

elegant white-gold balls and butterflies made the arrangement even better.

The decorations also featured reindeer and beautifully wrapped gift boxes.

Vina Morales



Ruffa Gutierrez

"Can't Buy Me Love" star Ruffa Gutierrez wows her

followers after uploading her red and shiny Christmas tree on Instagram.

COP28 reaches tentative climate deal calling for 'transitioning away from fossil fuels'

Kyle Bakx · CBC News · Posted: Dec 12, 2023 (Abridged version)

Latest draft contains much stronger language, but doesn't go as far as recommending a phase out

After negotiators worked through the night, a new tentative deal has been reached at COP28 which could signal the world's desire to move away from fossil fuels over the next few decades in an effort to address climate change.

Representatives from nearly 200 countries will gather in a public meeting later Wednesday morning in

groundbreaking as it would mark the first time that nations agree at a UN climate summit to explicitly address fossil fuels and the need to move away from oil, natural and coal in order to limit global warming.

There is added significance considering the climate summit is being held in OPEC-territory and al-Jaber, himself, is the chief executive of the United Arab Emirates' state-owned oil company, ADNOC.

Still, some countries and environmental leaders are feeling disappointed because the proposal



Climate activists protest against fossil fuels during the final stages of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), in Dubai on Tuesday. (Thaier Al-Sudani/Reuters)

since it's neither a small step forward nor a giant leap in efforts to address climate change, but somewhere in the middle.

"It's not the phase out that the president promised, but it would be a significant step forward, especially at a COP that has been so visibly captured by the fossil fuel lobby," said Caroline Brouillette, an environmental campaigner with Climate Action Network Canada.

"I feel very encouraged," federal environment minister Steven

Guilbeault told reporters before he left the summit late Tuesday. "I would say much more encouraged than I was [when the first draft was released.]"

He said the original text "did not go far enough when it comes to sending the world a signal that we need to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels."

Most large oilpatch companies in Canada already have set net-zero targets for 2050. Canadian oil production is expected to rise in 2024 to a record high. #



Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault speaks to reporters in Dubai late-Tuesday before leaving COP28. (Kyle Bakx/CBC)

Dubai to vote on the proposed deal.

The latest draft of the new text seen contains much stronger language on fossil fuels compared to a previous version.

Specifically, the text calls for a "transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science."

Groundbreaking proposal

During the two-week summit, COP28 president Sultan al-Jaber raised expectations by consistently vowing to strike a historic deal in Dubai.

The proposed agreement is

does not call for a 'phase out' or 'phase down' of fossil fuels. Al-Jaber had suggested those terms could be included in a final agreement, but are absent from the final draft.

The current phrasing of transiting away from oil, gas and coal to reach net zero emissions implies that countries will aim to lower their production and consumption of fossil fuels over the coming decades, but can still use them beyond 2050 by using carbon capture facilities and other technology to prevent greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere.

That's why the proposed agreement is described by some environmental experts as a paradox,

Spanish language.

Moreover, the participation of the youth signals an acknowledgement of their invaluable contributions by infusing energy, life and a fresh outlook into the ministry. The Knights of the Holy Altar deserve praise for dedication and for their eye-catching cadence of orchestrated steps performance with precision and discipline. Both the chorale ensemble and the Knights of Altar Servers have endeared them to other community churches that invite them to perform in their liturgical celebrations. Notre Dame des Philippines is very proud for all their works and wish them blessed holidays. #

From P. 3 Customs and Traditions

residing in the Province of Quebec.

The Catholic Mission has been blessed with hardworking faith members, known for their unswerving support, dedication, and service to God, to fellow Catholic brethren, the poor and the marginal members of society.

The choral ensemble of young people and adults provides a brilliantly choreographed repertoire of Latin, French, Tagalog, and English songs to underscore the universality of the Catholic faith. Hopefully, some Spanish religious songs would also find a niche in the repertoire, as a gesture of gratitude for the gift of faith and the

Putin tells Russia his war objectives are unchanged



The marathon event, cancelled last year, combines carefully vetted questions from ordinary Russians as well as journalists in the studio

Excerpts of news from report by George Wright, Vitaliy Shevchenko & Paul Kirby BBC News 14th December 2023, 08:13 EST

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said peace with Ukraine will only take place "when we achieve our objectives".

He was fielding questions from journalists and ordinary Russians in his first marathon news conference since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022.

Much of the largely choreographed event focused on what he calls the "special military operation in Ukraine".

He insisted the situation was improving throughout the front line. The "direct line" programme, televised for more than four hours by most major

channels, began with President Putin telling Russians: "The existence of our country without sovereignty is impossible. It will simply not exist."

He added that Russia's economy was strong for a time of war and the topic of conversation quickly moved to Ukraine.

While the Russian leader was speaking, Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg gave a news conference at alliance headquarters in Brussels where he warned: "If Putin wins in Ukraine, there is a real risk that his aggression will not end there."

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky warned the EU summit that Mr Putin would use indecision regarding the Ukraine war against them. #



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and your taste buds revel in delight!



Michelle Setlakwe
MNA for Mont-Royal-Outremont
Deputy House Leader of the Official Opposition
(514) 341-1151



Elisabeth Prass
MNA for D'Arcy-McGee
Elisabeth.Prass.DMG@assnat.qc.ca
(514) 488-7028



Gregory Kelley
MNA for Jacques-Cartier
Gregory.Kelley.JACA@assnat.qc.ca
(514) 697-7663



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**STEPHANIE
VALENZUELA**

Conseillère de la Ville
City Councillor
District Darlington

stephanie.valenzuela@montreal.ca
438-354-8710

**SONNY
MOROZ**

Conseiller de la Ville
City Councillor
District Snowdon

sonny.moroz@montreal.ca
438-349-7464



Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

5160, boulevard Décarie, bureau 610
Montréal (Québec) H3X 2H9

