

Aquino briefs McCain group on the 'hot thing' in the news

By Christine O. Avendaño Philippine Daily Inquirer, Thursday, January 19th, 2012

It was the "hot thing" in the news, hence President Benigno Aquino III took the time to brief a visiting group of US lawmakers about the ongoing impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda yesterday said Mr. Aquino had a "good discussion" Tuesday night in Malacañang with the American dignitaries led by US Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman, covering both bilateral concerns and issues internal to the Philippines, like the historic Corona trial at the Senate.

"Because that's the hot thing going on right now," Lacierda simply said to explain why the President brought up the trial in the meeting.

But Lacierda said not much of an exchange happened between the President and the US senators on that topic. "They were just briefed. Of course, as what (US) Secretary of State (Hilary) Clinton (had) mentioned, they will not be involved in the internal events in the Philippines," he stressed.

In the weeks leading to Corona's impeachment at the House and trial at the Senate, President



President Aquino welcomes to Malacañang on Tuesday four prominent American senators— Joe Lieberman (left), John McCain, Sheldon Whitehouse and Kelly Ayotte. McCain ran against President Barack Obama in the 2008 US presidential election. Lieberman was Al Gore's running mate in the 2000 White House race. GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

Aquino had openly sought the removal of the Chief Justice, whom he had accused of being biased in several high court rulings favoring former President and now detained Pampanga Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Tuesday's meeting, which was also attended by Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario and Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, centered on issues of mutual concern to the Philippines and the US, such as the security situation in the West

Philippine Sea (or what China calls South China Sea), Lacierda told reporters.

Lacierda also reported that McCain "lauded" President Aquino for his high approval rating. Lieberman, on the other hand, said he was "impressed with the way the President was running the country with his efforts on good governance," the Palace spokesperson recalled.

See Page 3 for more news about Chief Justice Corona's impeachment



See Page 2 - Online piracy and copyright infringement



See Page 14 - Sunken cruise ship

MPs urged to give up 'platinum-plated' pensions

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation says MPs have the best pension fund "on the planet" and it's time for them to lead by example and shut it down.

"This is a ripoff on a massive scale," CTF federal director Gregory Thomas said at a news conference on Parliament Hill.

The advocacy group says that officially, for every dollar that MPs pay into their own pension fund,

taxpayers contribute \$5. But the CTF says in reality, taxpayers pay closer to \$23. That figure takes into account the guaranteed 10.4 per cent interest rate on the fund, which Thomas says means that taxpayers are on the hook for more than they realize.

The 10.4 per cent interest rate is guaranteed in law and because the fund is not invested in the markets, it's not subject to the same fluctuations as most Canadians' pensions.

"This outrageous rate means they've basically got the best performing pension over 10 years on the planet," said Thomas, adding that it has outperformed the Canada Pension Plan by 60 per cent over the last 10 years.

The CTF says that the interest rate return means taxpayers are paying an additional \$248,668 into the

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See Page 21 - Youngest MP elected who can retire at age 25

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Editorial

Will long overdue changes to pensions of MPs be ever made?

It is amazing how MPs pensions have become so overly generous. Since when has this been a secret from the electorate? Will this awareness of the issue help achieve a more equitable pension system?

Reading and hearing about the outrageous benefits that seem to be so grossly exaggerated for a special class such as MPs and Senators can really make people see red. It is obviously unfair to anyone who had to work for 35 years before receiving a very modest pension. It is not only the amount of one's salary but also the contributions made to a pension fund that determines an ordinary worker's pension. In the case of MPs and senators, there appears to be only the requirement of having been an MP for at least 6 years and his pension is guaranteed for life and he does not have to wait to reach age 60 nor 65 years old. This really sounds unbelievable. It is not even proportional to the contributions made. For every \$1 contributed to their pension, they automatically make taxpayers contribute \$23. As if this is not enough, it has been revealed that there is a guaranteed interest of 10.4% that their pension fund earns automatically every year. Everyone else's pension fund is affected by the downturn of the economy, but this special privileged group is protected by having such a high interest guaranteed by law. The think tank, CD Howe Institute, cited the fact that if the MPs pension fund is not supported by any asset, there will be a serious short fall in the very near future by approximately \$1 billion.

More aggravating facts revealed by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation headed by Gregory Thomas make us wonder if MPs and Senators could ever be moved to do something about such a ridiculous situation. According to the CTF, while backbench MPs earn \$157,731 a year, an additional \$248,000 is added to each of their pensions every year by taxpayers, while they may contribute as little as \$10,990.

Soon, 39 MPs who were first elected in 2006 will pass the 6-year threshold to qualify for their parliamentary pension. They will enter "the promised land" in the words of Thomas. Together, the 39 MPs are set to collect \$30.9 million in lifetime payouts, according to the federation.

Younger MPs such as 33-year-old Conservative MP Chris Warkentin and 38-year-old Industry Minister Christian Paradis will have to wait until they are 55 years of age to collect. But even if they don't run again, the Federation said Warkentin and Paradis will still receive an annual pension for the rest of their lives worth at least \$46,049 and \$61,581 respectively.

"People are walking away after six years on the job with a big

payout for life. Starting at 55, a guaranteed index payoff, many of them in the multi-million of dollars," Thomas said.

Perhaps the reason for this generous pension, they say, is to attract the best qualified people to go into politics. But there are also other professionals, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, who devote their life to serve humanity but they are not so amply rewarded with generous pension benefits as much as MPs whose only requirement is to be a politician and stay at least 6 years in office before qualifying for a pension.

The inequality in the system can no longer be justified. A government critic pointed this out:

"Originally, there was a need to balance the economic uncertainty of being an MP and to ensure good candidates. However, with the salary plus benefits, and since an MP is in a position to make maximum RRSP contributions, there is no longer any justification for an MP to have a special pension plan that is richer than one any other employee with similar income would have."

Now that everyone has been made more aware of the issue of the unfair pension system, it is difficult to say whether or not changes will be made, and how fast they will be done. Gleaning from the remarks of the Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the government plans to look at this issue but did not set any timeline. The Finance Minister Jim Flaherty admits there is a need to make reasonable changes but to know what is reasonable he said is not easy and it is not only determined by one person.

The Green Party of Canada is in full agreement that reform is needed for Member of Parliament pension plans. "Examining how best to reform pensions of MPs is completely in line with what I've been calling for in terms of greater financial accountability from our elected representatives," said Green Leader Elizabeth May.

While we realize that there is a big opportunity for politicians to show a good example and leadership, by introducing a private member's bill to introduce reforms to the pension system, it may not be as quickly as we want the government to move. The CTF suggested to shut down the current pension scheme, and join the new Pooled Registered Pension Plan (PRPP). They also want to see taxpayer contributions capped at a dollar-to-dollar level. As well, they want to ensure that convicted fraudsters are barred from collecting parliamentary pension benefits.

In the face of all the glaring examples of inequities, will the people be more assertive of their rights to better treatment by their government? Will our MPs listen to the people?

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

US Congress postpones anti-piracy bills

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid said he would postpone a critical vote that had been scheduled for Jan. 24 "in light of recent events."

U.S. lawmakers stopped anti-piracy legislation in its tracks on Friday, delivering a stunning win for Internet companies that staged an unprecedented online protest this week to kill the previously fast-moving bills.

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid said he would postpone a critical vote that had been scheduled for Jan. 24 "in light of recent events."

Lamar Smith, the Republican chairman of the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee, followed suit, saying his panel would delay action on similar legislation until there is wider agreement on the issue.

"I have heard from the critics and I take seriously their concerns regarding proposed legislation to address the problem of online piracy. It is clear that we need to revisit the approach on how best to address the problem of foreign thieves that steal and sell American inventions and products," Smith said in a statement.

The bills, known as PIPA (PROTECT IP Act) in the Senate and SOPA (Stop Online Piracy Act) in the House, are aimed at curbing access to overseas websites that traffic in pirated content and counterfeit products, such as movies and music.

The legislation has been a priority for entertainment companies, publishers, pharmaceutical companies and other industry groups who say it is critical to curbing online piracy, which they believe costs them billions of dollars a year.

But technology companies are concerned the laws would undermine Internet freedoms, be difficult to enforce and encourage frivolous lawsuits.

Public sentiment on the bills shifted in recent weeks after Internet players ramped up their lobbying.

White House officials weighed in on Saturday, saying in a blog post that they had concerns about legislation that could make businesses on the Internet vulnerable to litigation and harm legal activity and free speech.

Then on Wednesday, protests blanketed the Internet, turning Wikipedia and other popular websites dark for 24 hours. Google, Facebook, Twitter and others protested the proposed legislation but did not shut down.

The protest had quick results: several sponsors of the legislation, including senators Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Orrin Hatch, John Boozman and Marco Rubio, have withdrawn their support.

In a brief statement on Friday, Reid said there was no reason why

concerns about the legislation cannot be resolved. He offered no new date for the vote.

Reid's action comes a day after a senior Democratic aide, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the measure lacked the 60 votes needed to clear a procedural hurdle in the 100-member Senate.

Swift reaction

The indefinite postponement of the bills drew quick praise from the Internet community, and ire from Hollywood.

"We appreciate that lawmakers have listened to our community's concerns, and we stand ready to work with them on solutions to piracy and copyright infringement that will not chill free expression or threaten the economic growth and innovation the Internet provides," a Facebook spokesman said.

Chris Dodd, chief executive of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former Democratic senator, said the stalling of legislation is a boost for criminals.

"As a consequence of failing to act, there will continue to be a safe haven for foreign thieves," Dodd said. Way forward?

Lawmakers, technology companies and the entertainment industry pledged to find a way to combat online piracy and copyright infringement.

Reddit.com, a vocal leader in the protests and among the sites to go dark on Wednesday, said it was pleased the protests were able to slow things down, but said piracy needs to be addressed.

"We really need people at the table who have the technical expertise about these issues who can ensure that whatever bills are drafted have airtight, technically sound language, definitions and frameworks," the company's general manager Erik Martin told Reuters.

Reid expressed hope on Friday that Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, who has been shepherding the bill through Congress, could help resolve differences in the legislation.

"I am optimistic that we can reach a compromise in the coming weeks," Reid said.

Leahy slammed the Senate

See Page 6 Anti-Piracy Bills

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Corona subpoena denied

MANILA, JANUARY 17, 2012 (INQUIRER) By Maila Ager INQUIRER.net 2:42 pm | Tuesday, January 17th, 2012 —The Senate acting as an impeachment court threw out on Tuesday an appeal by a senator-judge against the issuance of subpoena against Supreme Court chief Justice Renato Corona's wife and other family members.

Fourteen senators voted to

reservation," he said. Cayetano explained that some of the properties discovered by the prosecution team were allegedly in the names of Corona's wife and children. And under Republic Act 1379 on forfeiture of ill-gotten wealth, Cayetano pointed out that property unlawfully acquired by the respondent but its ownerships concealed by its being recorded in the name of, or held by the

Corona impeachment raps cover ill-gotten wealth'

abs-cbnNEWS.com Posted at 01/21/2012 5:21 PM | Updated as of 01/21/2012 11:25 PM

MANILA, Philippines (UDPATE) – The impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Renato Corona covers the issue of ill-gotten wealth since the respondent himself acknowledged the charge, a law

The sub paragraphs stated other allegations, including non-declaration of certain properties in his SALN, and that the properties might have been acquired through ill-gotten wealth.

Corona, in his reply, branded the other allegations as "conjectural and speculative" and said they "do not amount



Corona's SALN submitted to the Senate

expert said Saturday. This week's proceedings saw defense lawyers posing continuous objection to prosecutors' presentation of evidence on Corona's alleged illegal wealth, a charge they claimed was not made properly in Article 2 of the impeachment complaint.

But Amado Valdez, dean of the University of the East College of Law, said that Article 2 is "already sufficiently informative as far as what the accusation is," and Corona's reply to it only made it valid.

"If you read their answer to the complaint, they said that he's also charged with ill-gotten wealth, therefore, he has been properly informed of the accusation against him," Valdez told ANC Dateline Philippines on Saturday.

to a concrete statement of fact that might require a denial." Nonetheless, he denied the allegations "flatly," saying he acquired his assets from legitimate sources of income, mostly from his "professional toils."

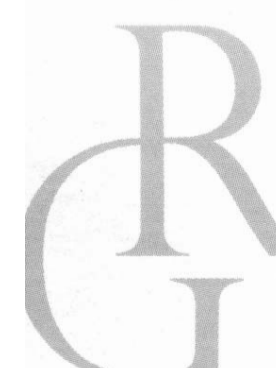
Aside from Corona's lawyers, senator-judges Alan Peter Cayetano and Francis Escudero expressed misgivings on Article 2 of the complaint, with the latter saying that each article "must accuse the respondent of a singular, separate act."

Due to confusion on whether or not Article 2 covers ill-gotten wealth, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, the court's presiding judge, asked both the prosecution and defense panels to submit memoranda on the matter.

Prosecution scores point Meanwhile, Valdez said the first week of the trial was a good week for the prosecution despite reported misses and

Article 2 accuses Corona of betraying public trust and violating the Constitution for failing to disclose his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN).

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Chief Justice Renato Corona and his wife

sustain Senate President Juan Ponce-Enrile's ruling to deny a request to subpoena Corona, wife Cristina, and two children— Clara and Francis— while only six voted in favor of Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano's appeal to reconsider the ruling with regards to the wife and other family members.


While he agreed to the Senate's decision to deny the issuance of subpoena against the Chief Justice, Cayetano expressed his reservation against the denial to subpoena the wife and other family members.

"I agree with the ruling in so far as the Chief of Justice is concerned but as to the wife, the children and the son-in-law, may I put on record my


respondent's spouse, ascendants, descendants, relatives or any other person was characterized as "not among legitimately acquired properties."


Cayetano said the court should not shortcut the process by denying the subpoena against other family members "because we can't predict if and when the daughter will in fact manifest or claim the privilege or the husband will claim the disqualification against the wife."

"The proper procedure is for us to issue the subpoena and for the defence or witnesses to be the ones to claim the privilege later on," he pointed out. ■



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From Page 1 Pensions

fund, per MP, on top of the dollar contribution.

\$102 million to MP pensions each year. When you combine the dollar contribution and the guaranteed interest rate return, taxpayers contribute a total of \$102 million to the fund every year, while MPs hand over about \$4.5 million, according to the CTF's calculations.

MPs are eligible for the pension after serving at least six years in the House of Commons and can start collecting it when they turn 55. Thirty-nine MPs who were elected in 2006 will become eligible for the MP pension plan on Monday, and the CTF



The Canadian Taxpayers Federation has an ongoing campaign about the MP pension fund and said Wednesday that MPs have their snouts in the pension trough. (Sean Kilpatrick/Canadian Press)

says they will be eligible for a collective \$1.9 million in annual pensions starting in 2015.

Thomas said Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his government have some tough decisions to make in the coming months in order to keep its promise of balancing the budget in the years ahead.

Cashing in

According to the CTF's calculations: Prime Minister Stephen Harper can collect a pension of at least \$223,500 per year by 2015

Interim Liberal Leader Bob Rae, if he stays on as leader, can collect a pension of at least \$71,400 per year by 2015

NDP MP Pierre-Luc Dusseault, elected last year at age 19, can collect a pension of \$40,000 per year if he retires at 27

20 MPs will be able to collect more than \$100,000 a year if they retire or lose after the next election in 2015

"There's no way the prime minister and these MPs can do what they need to do to balance the budget and control spending if they've got their own snouts in the pension trough. They need to lead by example," said Thomas. "They need to put Canada ahead of their own personal bank balance."

The CTF, which released a report Wednesday detailing the pensions that current MPs will be entitled to, wants Parliament to put an end to the fund completely. Thomas said the "platinum-plated" pension fund should be shut down.

Instead, they could set up an optional dollar-for-dollar matching defined contribution plan.

But he says the \$23 that

taxpayers currently give to the fund for every MP-contributed dollar is "outrageous" and "it can't be defended by anyone."

Harper says MP pensions will be looked at

The CTF says that as the government looks for savings, it shouldn't even think of tampering with the pension plan for public servants unless it is willing to look at its own. "There's no way they can do anything about pensions unless they start in their own backyard," said Thomas.

In an interview earlier this week with the CBC's Peter Mansbridge, Harper was asked about the government's plans for pensions. P.O.V.

Should Ottawa shut down MPs' pension fund?

Harper said his government has already made changes to bring the public service pension system more in line with private sector plans and that while it is looking at the pension issue, "we haven't taken any final decisions."

"As you know, it also raises the issue of pensions of parliamentarians, and that issue will have to be looked at at the same time," he said.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said Wednesday that he expects the discussion around MP pensions to continue.

"I think we have to be reasonable in all of our remuneration schemes, including salary, benefits and pensions, and that applies to all of us who are in the world of public service, whether we're politicians or employed by the government of Canada as public servants or elsewhere," he said.

Flaherty said, however, that it's not up to him to decide what is "reasonable."

"I'm sure that we will have different views expressed about what is reasonable and what isn't," he said. "It's not for me as a single member of Parliament to make that determination."

Those comments gave the CTF some encouragement, and Thomas said the group is hopeful it will see progress with its campaign.

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MPs' pension plan faces \$1 billion shortfall, report finds

Kenyon Wallace Toronto Star

Pension troubles in store for retired workers as plans across Canada face deficits

Defeated MPs turn to gold-plated pensions

On paper, the pension plan for MPs and senators is gold-plated and financially sound. In reality, however, the benefits promised to our elected representatives are underfunded by close to \$1 billion, according to a new report.

The C.D. Howe Institute, a Toronto-based non-profit think-tank, says taxpayers are on the hook for that amount because the current parliamentary pension plan has set aside no assets to pay for the future benefits. Unlike other pension plans, such as the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, in which contributions from members are invested in the market to fund future benefits, the Pension Plan for Members of Parliament guarantees retirement incomes that aren't pegged to investment returns.

"These MP pensions are basically unfunded," said Alex Laurin, associate director of research at the C.D. Howe Institute. "That means they'll be paid out by taxpayers through general government funds when they are due."

The institute found that if ordinary Canadians wanted to secure a retirement income equivalent to an MP's pension, they would have to save 50 per cent of their income every year. But the Income Tax Act stipulates that Canadians — most of whom have no pensions at all — can contribute only 18 per cent of their annual incomes to their own RRSPs.

The report also takes aim at the federal chief actuary's assessment last year that found an "excess" of \$176 million in the plan — an unlikely scenario at a time when

John Ivison: Public pensions a fat target for Conservatives

Prime Minister knows that he cannot ask public servants and Canadian seniors to suffer austerity measures while MPs benefit from one of the most lavish pension plans in the country. Possible reforms to the MPs' scheme could include raising the minimum retirement age (currently 55) to lengthening the period of time it takes to qualify for a pension (currently just six years).

Senior sources said that a decision on public service pensions has not yet been made, largely because of legal and legislative barriers to unilateral changes. But the source confirmed the government could still move on MPs' pensions, even if it holds off on reforms covering the bureaucracy. He said all three strands of pension policy are linked as part of the government's plan to make sure there is sustainability and fairness in the system.

Ian Lee, a professor at Sprott Business School, said the government would be smart to address what he called "the profound unfairness of MPs' pensions" before it moves on broader reforms.

"The government cannot ask ordinary Canadians to put their shoulder to the wheel and carry to the burden of austerity — if the elites are not sharing in the pain," he said.

MPs' pensions have long been a lightning rod for criticism. Preston Manning and his Reform Party MPs "opted

almost every other defined-benefit plan in Canada has more liabilities than assets, the institute found.

"This is just accounting, it's just on paper," Laurin said. "There are no real assets."

The institute recommends MPs start saving for their retirements in a properly funded pooled registered plan, and suggests increasing MPs' wages in exchange for more modest retirement benefits.

Gregory Thomas, federal director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation — which this week issued a call to parliamentarians to adopt a more realistic pension plan — said the biggest scandal was the fact that MPs ignored a request by the chief actuary two years ago. That request urged them to halve the annualized 10.4 per cent "rate of return" — a rate set by the government — that the plan has been getting over the last 10 years.

After losing his seat in last year's election, former Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe, 63, walked away with a \$140,765 annual pension. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who currently makes \$315,000 a year, will be eligible by 2015 to collect a yearly pension of \$223,500, according to the federation.

"Every MP needs to answer the question, why in the middle of the biggest economic meltdown in our generation did you insist on a 10.4 per cent annual return on your pension fund?" Thomas said.

"It's a phony return on an imaginary investment. MPs cannot lead if they don't lead by example. This pension they've been taking all the way through this economic downturn — it's scandalous."

out" of the government pension plan when they came to Ottawa in 1993, but opted back in when then-prime minister Jean Chrétien gave them the chance in 2000.

The formula that determines MPs' pensions has been reduced since then but remains extremely prodigal. The latest numbers show that taxpayers pay \$5.50 for every \$1 that MPs and senators contributed to their pension plan. Most private schemes call on the employer to contribute \$1 for every \$1 added by the member. The parliamentary pension scheme paid out \$48.8-million in the 2009/2010 fiscal year to 503 former MPs and senators collecting pension benefits. The report said 117 of them received more than \$70,000 a year, with the average for senators being \$56,512 and for MPs \$53,586.

Since then, 113 more MPs were defeated at the last election and will receive millions more in pensions and severance payments. There was an outcry last May when it emerged that defeated Bloc Québécois leader, Gilles Duceppe is in line to receive \$140,000 a year from taxpayers, despite devoting his career to breaking up the country.

Handout MP Pierre-Luc Dusseault can aim for Freedom 25.

MPs are eligible for a pension after serving in the House for six years, and pensions are calculated on the best five earnings years. On a current salary of \$157,000 a year, MPs qualify for an indexed lifetime pension of \$27,000 when they reach 55. That means a six-year MP

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Pensions

Heirs and inheritance

If your spouse dies intestate (without a last will), who will inherit under the New Philippine Civil Code?

Compiled by Budz Sarmiento

Situation A: You and your deceased spouse have children.

[1] Only you and your children are entitled to inherit under Article 996 of the New Civil Code of the Philippines. Your deceased spouse's siblings, parents, or grandparents are excluded.

Art. 996. If a widow or widower and legitimate children or descendants are left, the surviving spouse has in the succession the same share as that of each of the children.

If any or some of your children died before your spouse, their legitimate children will be entitled to inherit by right of representation.

[2] If your deceased spouse has illegitimate children, they are entitled to inherit under Article 176 of the Family Code. Please read "Special Rule Under the Philippine Civil Code if Legitimate and Illegitimate Children Survived Together, With or Without the Surviving Spouse"

Situation B: You and your deceased spouse have no children.

[1] If your deceased spouse's parents (either father or mother, or both) are still alive, then you and the parents will inherit under Article 997 of the New Civil Code of the Philippines.

Art. 997. When the widow or widower survives with legitimate parents or ascendants, the surviving spouse shall be entitled to one-half of the estate, and the legitimate parents or ascendants to the other half.

If your spouse's parents are already dead but other "ascendants" (like grandparents or great-grandparents) are still alive, Article 997 will also apply. Your spouse's siblings, if any, are not entitled to inherit.

[2] If your deceased spouse has illegitimate children, then you and the illegitimate children will inherit under Article 998 of the New Civil Code of the Philippines.

Art. 998. If a widow or widower survives with illegitimate children, such widow or widower shall be entitled to one-half of the inheritance, and the illegitimate children or their descendants, whether legitimate or illegitimate, to the other half.

In simpler terms, you will get 50% of the inheritance while the illegitimate children will divide among themselves the other 50%.

Article 998 applies even if your deceased spouse, at the time of death, had parents or siblings. Only you and the illegitimate children are

entitled to inherit. If the illegitimate children died before your spouse, then you and the illegitimate children's descendants (by right of representation) will inherit.

[3] If your deceased spouse has illegitimate children and "ascendants" (parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents), then you, the illegitimate children, and the ascendants will inherit under Article 1000 of the New Civil Code of the Philippines.

Art. 1000. If legitimate ascendants, the surviving spouse, and illegitimate children are left, the ascendants shall be entitled to one-half of the inheritance, and the other half shall be divided between the surviving spouse and the illegitimate children so that such widow or widower shall have one-fourth of the estate, and the illegitimate children the other fourth.

In simpler terms, you will get 25% of the inheritance; your spouse's illegitimate children will also get 25%; and the ascendants will get 50%.

Your spouse's siblings, if any, are not entitled to inherit.

[4] If your deceased spouse has no ascendants (parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents) or illegitimate children, but has siblings, then you and the siblings will inherit under Article 1001 of the New Civil Code of the Philippines.

Art. 1001. Should brothers and sisters or their children survive with the widow or widower, the latter shall be entitled to one-half of the inheritance and the brothers and sisters or their children to the other half.

In simpler terms, you will get 50% of the inheritance while the brothers and sisters will divide among themselves the other 50%.

The law does not distinguish between siblings of the full or half blood. If your deceased spouse's father or mother had illegitimate children, these children cannot inherit from your spouse because of the "iron barrier" between the legitimate and illegitimate sides of the family.

If any of the siblings died before your spouse, then that sibling's legitimate children (meaning, your spouse's nephews or nieces) will inherit by right of representation. These children will divide among themselves the share that should have gone to their parent (the deceased sibling).

[5] If your deceased spouse has no illegitimate children, siblings, or ascendants (parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents), then you inherit everything.

Notes:

[1] These articles do not apply if your marriage has been declared void, or you are the offending spouse in case of legal separation.

[2] Steps in computing the inheritance:

- You must liquidate the community property (Articles 102 to 104 of the Family Code) or the conjugal partnership (Articles 129 to 33 of the Family Code).

- The remaining portion will then be divided among the heirs.

For example, you and your spouse have four children, and your spouse died leaving one million pesos in property.

1. Your share in the community property or conjugal partnership property is 50% or five hundred thousand pesos.

2. The remaining five hundred thousand pesos will be divided among the children, with you counted as one child.

3. Five hundred thousand pesos divided by five: you and the children will receive one hundred thousand pesos each as inheritance.

(With files posted by Atty. Gerry T. Galacio on a blog site called Legal Updates)

Japan-Philippines Partnership

By Carmelita G. Nuqui and Jeremaiah M. Opiniano

JAPAN offers lots of memories—good and bad—to Filipinos, not just its rising sun that is an economic magnet for Filipinos to go there.

There's former overseas performing artist Maricris Sioson who, exactly 20 years ago, was mysteriously killed by alleged Yakuza elements five months after arriving in Tokyo.

Sioson's mysterious death never stopped a wave of migration by Filipinas doing the same kind of work which, to advocates for migrant workers, is tantamount to trafficking and to putting these women's homeland into shame. That kind of migrant worker deployment even had processes and documents to be acquired, as well as a large-scale recruitment business which the Philippine government regulated. The tide changed in 2005, when Japanese immigration law changed and tightened the entry requirements of those wanting to work as OPAs. The amendment included provisions that anyone seeking such a visa must prove that he or she has education or experience as an entertainer.

Certification from another government is no longer enough. This resulted in a steep drop in the number of entertainers being sent by the Philippines from about 80,000 in 2004 to about 38,000 in 2005. In 2010, the number of Filipino women deployed to Japan as entertainers was only about a thousand.

There is now an increase in the number Filipinas marrying Japanese, that being a means to escape poverty (as some departing

young Filipina spouses married to elderly Japanese admitted).

Japan-Philippine relations surrounding overseas migration also evolved. The bilateral relationship became economic, resulting in an economic partnership agreement that has, among its terms, deploying Filipino nurses to Japan. Only two of over-200 deployed nurses passed the Nihongo-laced nurses licensure examination in Japan, and currently the nurses deployment provision of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement is being evaluated.

While distant from a matter that concerns Filipinos' migration to Japan, the relationship between the two countries is beyond overseas migration.

Japan is among the Philippines' major source countries of official development assistance, in which civil society groups hope that such development aid undergo transparent and accountable processes. Nevertheless, the aid from Japan led to bridges, light railway transit systems, and even emergency relief for people in Mindanao.

Japan-Philippine economic relations will not be complete without the Japanese companies heading to the country—from vehicles to electronic equipment, some of which became household names among Filipinos (e.g. Toyota, Sony, among others).

The relationship between the two nations even led to the reverse, i.e. of developing country Philippines helping Japan.

Images of the waves that splashed eastern Japan given an 8.9-magnitude earthquake and tsunami last March simply touched Filipinos' hearts to help (for example, the Philippines-Japan NGO Partnership, a group of non-government groups here that has a partner NGO network in Japan, donated some money to Japanese NGOs providing disaster relief in tsunami-struck areas in Japan).

Even Filipinos affected by the quake and tsunami had to be helped. There are stories of cause-oriented groups courting their donations to the Philippine embassy in Tokyo and to some Japanese NGOs directed at the Filipino families victimized by the quake and tsunami.

Still, Japanese maintained their resolve even in the midst of tragedy, and Filipinos learned from it. Says a Japanese taxi driver to a Filipino broadcast journalist who wondered why Japanese are patiently waiting a long line in Sendai to siphon fuel from vehicles wrecked by the tsunami: "If we do that, I wanted no part of it since he did not want to join us in hell."

But Filipinos, thanks to the opportunity of being in Japan for work, study and permanent residency, extend themselves to help the Philippines through philanthropy. Filipino groups of all sorts in Japan—scholars in Japan, Filipinos based in Japanese communities, migrants'

See Page 14 Japan-Philippines

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers
About Our Environment

Dear EarthTalk: There are a number of companies out there now doing "energy audits" for the home, after which they try to sell you attic insulation and other products and services. Is this just a scam or would it be wise for me to look into this?

- Bill Richards., New York, NY

For the most part, companies offering energy audits are reputable and legitimate and will help you both save money and reduce your carbon footprint if you follow their advice in regard to upgrading things like insulation, windows and appliances. "A home energy assessment, also known as a home energy audit, is the first step

landscaping. It also posts guidelines for energy-efficient designing and remodeling.)

You should also check the filters on heating and cooling equipment to see if they need to be changed so as to keep your furnace and air conditioners functioning at maximum efficiency. And if these or other appliances over 15 years old consider replacing them with newer models that meet federal EnergyStar efficiency criteria. Also, swapping out older incandescent bulbs in light fixtures with higher efficiency compact fluorescent or LED bulbs will save money and energy.

A professional energy auditor with dedicated assessment tools and the knowledge of how to use them will in all likelihood carry out a more comprehensive assessment than you can do yourself. "Thorough assessments often use equipment such as blower doors, which measure the extent of leaks in the building envelope, and infrared cameras,

Historically, Native Americans relied on the root of Echinacea to numb toothache pain and treat dyspepsia as well as snake, insect and spider bites. While some modern day folks rely on Echinacea just based on this anecdotal evidence, scientific studies have verified that the herb can be effective. To wit, a 2008 University of Connecticut review of 14 different clinical trials of Echinacea use

underscored the importance of psychological factors in fighting illness and did not say that Echinacea isn't effective.

Given the lack of FDA oversight of herbs, different formulations may contain vastly different amounts of Echinacea. A 2004 evaluation of 19 different



Echinacea has gained popularity in recent years as a remedy for the common cold. But because it is not regulated as a medical drug by the FDA -- and given the variation between dosages and formulations available to consumers -- it is difficult to get definitive answers as to its effectiveness. Credit: iStock

found that taking the supplement reduced the chances of getting a cold by 31 percent, and helped people get over cold and flu symptoms a day and a half earlier than those who didn't take it.

Researchers initially thought Echinacea's effectiveness was due to its immune-boosting traits, but they now believe instead that the herb works more as an anti-inflammatory agent. A 2009 University of British Columbia study found that typical commercially available Echinacea preparations are effective in reducing the body's production of inflammatory proteins in human bronchial cells. In layman's terms, this means that Echinacea can help lessen the annoying symptoms of common colds, the flu and other respiratory ailments. Furthermore, the study found that Echinacea is just as effective in reducing bronchial inflammation whether it is consumed before or after a viral infection sets in, indicating that taking moderate doses on a regular basis during cold season can help prevent some bronchial irritation if and when cold symptoms begin.

Interestingly, though, a 2010 study of 719 participants in Wisconsin focusing on illness duration and severity found that the duration of the common cold could be shortened by taking a pill of some sort, whether Echinacea or a placebo with no active ingredients. But this study merely

Echinacea brands by the non-profit Consumers Union and published in Consumer Reports found that the amount of Echinacea actually present in supplements varied considerably from brand to brand—and even in some cases from bottle to bottle of the same brand. The magazine recommended a few brands as "best picks," including Spring Valley, Origin and Sundown, all which featured high concentrations of Echinacea and reliable dosage amounts from pill to pill.

Before taking the Echinacea plunge, beware that the herb can cause allergic reactions in some people and may interact negatively with some common medications. Researchers warn that anyone with autoimmune disease or a handful of other illnesses should not take Echinacea without first consulting with their doctor.

CONTACTS: FDA, www.fda.gov; Consumers Union, www.consumersunion.org.

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Companies offering energy audits are generally reputable and legitimate and will help you both save money and reduce your carbon footprint if you follow their advice. Pictured: A home energy auditor inspects a hot water heater. Credit: USDA

to assess how much energy your home consumes and to evaluate what measures you can take to make your home more energy efficient," reports the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). "An assessment will show you problems that may, when corrected, save you significant amounts of money over time."

"During the assessment, you can pinpoint where your house is losing energy," adds DOE. "Energy assessments also determine the efficiency of your home's heating and cooling systems [and] may also show you ways to conserve hot water and electricity."

You can conduct your own energy audit if you know where to look for air leaks (drafts), water waste and other key areas of a home's inefficiencies. The DOE's energysavers.gov website has guidelines to help homeowners conduct their own do-it-yourself home energy assessments. For instance, DOE recommends that homeowners make a list of obvious air leaks, such as through gaps along baseboards or at the edges of flooring and at wall and ceiling junctures. The potential energy savings from reducing drafts in a home can be as high as 30 percent per year, reports DOE. (The DOE website also provides information on other ways to save money and resources through less obvious things such as outdoor

which reveal hard-to-detect areas of air infiltration and missing insulation."

If you are concerned about enlisting a for-profit firm that upsells its own energy efficiency upgrade services based on a "free" energy audit, check with your utility to see whether it offers unbiased, independent energy audit services (which it may do for free or for a nominal cost). The assessor from your utility may be able to recommend window and door replacement companies, heating and cooling specialists and other vendors nearby that do reputable work to make your home is not only energy efficient but warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.

CONTACTS: DOE Energy Savers, www.energysavers.gov; EnergyStar, www.energystar.gov.

Dear EarthTalk: What's the story with Echinacea? Many herb teas contain it, and many people swear by it as a cold remedy. But I've also seen headlines saying that the herb has no medicinal value whatsoever. Can you set the record straight? -- Arlene Hixson, Portland, ME

Echinacea, also known as purple coneflower, has gained popularity in recent years as a nutritional supplement that proponents believe is helpful in staving off the common cold and shortening its duration. But given the variation between dosages and formulations—such herbs are not regulated as medical drugs by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and so makers have little incentive to standardize—it's hard to get definitive answers as to Echinacea's effectiveness.

From Page 2 Anti-Piracy Bills

derailment of the anti-piracy legislation as a "knee-jerk reaction to a monumental problem" but said he is committed to getting a bill signed into law this year.

There are already alternatives in the works.

Senator Ron Wyden introduced a bill last month that he said "meets the same publicly stated goals as SOPA or Protect IP without causing massive damage to the Internet."

Representative Darrel Issa on Wednesday introduced a companion bill

in the House.

Issa said SOPA and PIPA lacked a fundamental understanding of how Internet technologies work. The technology sector has shown more optimism about prospects for Issa and Wyden's alternative bill, called the OPEN Act.

"It's a great starting point for discussion, and we're definitely very open to that," said Tiffiny Cheng, co-founder of Fight for the Future, a nonprofit that helped organize the Internet protests against SOPA and PIPA. (Reuters)

Philippine Embassy Bulletin Board

Consular Outreach Mission in Montreal on February 17, 2012

The Philippine Embassy in Ottawa will hold a Consular Outreach Mission in Montreal on Friday, February 17, 4-9 PM and Saturday, February 18, 9 AM until 6 PM
Philippine Community Centre (FAMAS Centre)
4708 Van Home Avenue
Montreal, Quebec H3W 1H7

Tel: -514-341-7477

Philippine Embassy – Closed on January 23, 2012
January 12, 2012

NOTICE FROM THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY

Embassy will be closed on Monday January 23rd – Chinese New Year/Philippine declared holiday.

(For very urgent matters/emergencies, please call the duty Officer at

(613-614-2846)

Save the Date – 7th Ambassadors, Consuls General, and Tourism Directors Tour to the Philippines on July 11-15,

much. Everything is happening all at once. We feel like we are on the edge of a cliff."

Herrera and Parizeault approached Outremont MP Thomas Mulcair to have the processing of their application for sponsorship expedited on humanitarian ground. But to their chagrin, they were told to wait. They contacted other foundations and organizations but they were given a run-around and told that Herrera could not be offered any financial assistance because she was not a Canadian citizen yet.

Herrera was at her wit's end when while having a chemotherapy at the Jewish General Hospital last October, she met Stacey Charon, a teacher and also a patient with terminal breast cancer. Feeling sorry for Herrera, Charon contacted the hospital staff, the Gazette and CTV to tell Herrera' plight. Charon paid the cost of the first chemotherapy treatment and a Filipina friend paid the second treatment. Herrera and Parizeault paid the rest of the treatment with whatever money they had.

More outpouring of support from the community came in when Jelly's story was published in the Gazette and televised on Channel 11. An anonymous person donated \$15,000 which is being handled by Hope & Cope. Roche Canada, a pharmaceutical firm, gave them a 25% discount on the cost of Herceptin, an anti-antibody designed to target and block the function of HER2, a

protein produced by a specific gene with cancer-causing potential. Even if Roche offered a discount, it is still too expensive for them to afford the treatment. The Philippine Foundation of Montreal donated \$300.00 plus groceries.

"The money she received is managed by Hope & Cope for her chemotherapy," said Caring Tabunar, co-founder of the PFM. "They need money for daily living like rent and food."

Herrera said that she would have chemotherapy every three weeks for about nine months. She added that it costs \$3,000 minimum per shot of the chemotherapy. The entire treatment will cost from \$40,000 to \$50,000. And there is another \$12,000 to \$20,000 for radiotherapy.

She also clarified that any extra money after her treatment will be spent to help other cancer patients.

Meanwhile, she just received a letter from the immigration before New Year informing her that her application for sponsorship is being processed and she will be notified of further requirements.

"All I can do is hope and pray that everything will be ok this 2012," said Herrera, who has two children, age 19 and 21, in the Philippines.

Pinay is holding a fundraising dinner to support Herrera. Details will be announced soon. Name of donors and amount of donations will be published.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Friendship and Fellowship Youth Centre holds meeting February 4

The Friendship and Fellowship Youth Centre is pleased to announce its following schedule on Feb. 4, Saturday:
4 pm - Consultative Members - composed of all representatives of Filipino Associations of Montreal & Suburbs and media
5 pm - Youth Parents Fellowship meeting
6:15 - Questions and Answers (refreshments)

In this connection, please help the FFYC inform the Filipino community of this important meeting.

1. It requests all concerned to help recruit volunteers to assist Ms. Amy Anam Manon-og

2. It invites leaders of Filipino youth organizations to attend its meetings

3. It needs immediate resource persons who are bilingual in both official languages, English & French

For more information, call (450) 466-8711

Positive outlook in life helps Herrera, a breast cancer victim, cope with her adversity

W. G. Quiambao

Whenever Jelly Herrera meets friends, she greets them with a bright smile. Although she is battling a breast cancer and facing financial snag, she still manages to have a positive outlook in life. There is no indication of the problems she is facing.

"I've to be strong," said Herrera, a resident of Cote-des-Neiges. "I'm a fighter. A survivor."

Herrera arrived in Calgary in 2006 as a tourist to take care of her sister who had an ovarian cancer. When her sister's condition improved, Herrera was invited to visit her relative in Montreal. She did not want to go back to the Philippines because of her ex-husband who mentally and physically abused her. She applied for a refugee visa in Montreal.

While waiting for her refugee status claim to be approved, she met Patrick Parizeault on the internet in 2007. They fell in love and got married in November of 2010. Because of a poor advice of an immigration consultant, she withdrew her refugee status which was already granted in 2008 and she applied for sponsorship. That's when her problems began.

Her hope for a better future dashed when she had a mammogram in

January 2011. She was shocked and downhearted when she found out that she had a Stage 2 breast cancer. She had a surgery to remove the tumour and affected lymph nodes and had chemotherapy in May. There were six more therapy sessions when her health coverage expired in September. Immediately, she had her temporary medicare renewed but she was told that she could not do it anymore because her status had changed from refugee to sponsorship. When her refugee status was approved in 2008, she was granted a temporary medical permit by the Régie de l'Assurance Maladie du Quebec under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. But now, she is not entitled for Medicare since her sponsorship is still being processed.

Added to Herrera's woes was the bad news that Parizeault lost his permanent job. He used to be a press printer in a printing company and because of a lack of work in that area, he changed trade of work. He went back to school and became a semi-remorque truck operator class 1. As his hope for a better life grew for him and Herrera, he lost his permanent job in November.

"I work once or twice a month, 7 hours a day," says Parizeault, an on-call truck driver. "My mom could help only that

From Page 3 Corona Impeachment

blunders.

"It's a point for the prosecution," he said. "As far as I'm concerned, what the prosecution must do was done. It was not as fast as the public anticipated it to be, but for lawyers who have experience in court proceedings, this is quite the normal pace."

He said Enrile was also "a big winner" as the proceedings showed a vote for his leadership and his ability to make sound decisions.

"It's also a victory for the process because you have a presiding officer who knows his law, he has strong leadership to get the case going." "No bias"

Valdez said that the senator-judges, for their part, have been impartial so far.

"The bias is not really that telling or crucial at this point of time because the primary consideration here is the truth brought out," he said.

Several senators, particularly Sen. Franklin Drilon, were accused of showing bias towards the prosecutors for getting responses from the witnesses that the prosecution failed to obtain.

Drilon, on the trial's third day,

was able to elicit from Supreme Court Clerk of Court Enriqueta Vidal that she has in her possession Corona's SALN.

But Valdez said the senator-judges were merely practicing their right to ask the witnesses, the prosecutors and the defense.

"They are answerable to the highest political authority in the country: the people. They have to be sensitive to the perception of the people that they are unfair of administering injustice to Chief Justice Corona," said Valdez. 'Liberal' rules

Valdez said he expects the next hearings to be more "liberal" in the rules, noting that the impeachment court is more interested in the truth than the technicalities.

"Next week, I expect the presiding judge will start to be liberal in his rulings because he already proven he knows the rules. The rules can be relaxed so the truth can be brought forward."

"During the time that the prosecution will be presenting its case, it will be less stressful for the lawyers because the demand to really strictly follow the rules of evidence will be less arduous on their part," he added. Valdez said the trial may end in two to three months at the pace it is going.



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The more Magallanes explains, the more stupid he appears

I wish that the Filipino Forum had an online version like this newspaper has, but I understand that the Forum's publisher/editor-in-chief isn't solvent enough to afford one. His false claim of journalistic success and having more than 100 advertisers is nothing more than a symptom of his affliction. Remember narcissistic personality disorder (NPD)? He has to tell outright lies to satisfy his delusion of grandeur. His penchant for denigrating people who deign to expose his outrageous ways is another symptom of that disorder. There are many other symptoms and he meets all of them. If his illness were cancer, it would be Stage 4.

Anyway, I was able to read the latest issue of the Forum, particularly the parts where my name was mentioned and my reputation mangled (again!) by its incorrigible author. Thanks to the kindness of my reliable sources, I'm not too far behind current events in Montreal.

HE NEEDS REFRESHER COURSE IN GRAMMAR 101 MORE THAN THIS COLUMNIST DOES

If we take pretending-to-be UP graduate's explanation concerning his use of "disdain" without reference – repeat, without reference – to what he wrote in the November 2011 issue of his there's-nothing-like-it Forum, he's correct and I'm wrong. However, my "(sic)" comment that appeared in the December 2011 edition of this column hinged on his original sentence that says "I don't disdain for his station in life." Since there's "don't" before "disdain," it is safe and logical to assume that "disdain" in that sentence is used as a verb. Thus, the preposition "for" doesn't have any business being there. If he wanted to use "for," he should have used "disdain" as a noun and then put "have" after "don't." The sentence will then read as follows: "I don't have disdain for his station in life." Another way of making the sentence grammatically correct is to take out "for." The sentence will then read "I don't disdain his station in life. Obviously, he is confused between "disdain," the verb and "disdain," the noun. UP alumnus, he is not!

He even took great pain in citing "contempt" and "scorn" as the meanings of "disdain" as if I didn't know. OK, fine! Now, let me make a point by replacing "disdain" with "contempt." The sentence will now read "I don't contempt for his station in

life." It sounds awkward, doesn't it? It's because the noun "contempt" cannot function as a verb. However, "scorn" can, but just like with "disdain," you can't say "I don't scorn for his station in life." It has to be either "I don't scorn his station in life" or "I don't have scorn for his station in life." Scorn is a verb in the first sentence and a noun in the second.

Even his example sentence (Most pupils feel scorn or contempt for those who cheat.), while grammatically correct, is not only inappropriate but also misleading because it isn't in the same category as the sentence in question "I don't disdain for his station in life" is. If the sentence was "I don't feel disdain (or scorn or contempt) for his station in life," the presence of "for" in the contested sentence is fine and within the rules.

The funny thing is the more he explains, the more he exposes his ignorance and stupidity. Grammar 101? Tell me more about it, Fraud, and expose your ignorance further. I can't help thinking about my use of the possessive apostrophe in the article that I wrote about the last UPS election. Fraud tried to embarrass me by publicly questioning my knowledge of the English grammar, but he was the one who ended up embarrassed.

WALA NA ANG 2011, MAWALA NA RIN SANA ANG MGA BALASUBAS AT MAY NPD

Narito ako ngayon sa Pilipinas at masayang nagbabakasyon. Bagama't mahigit na 13,100 kilometro ang layo ko sa Montreal, walang kapanapanabik na balita at nakakaintrigang bulung-bulongan ang nakakalampas sa aking pandinig at kaalaman. Maraming salamat sa aking mga mapapagkatiwalaang tagapagbalita at hindi ako gaanong naiwanan ng mga pinakahuling kaganapan at kuwentong kutsero na panakanakang lumulutang at kumakalat sa Montreal at mga karatig na bayan.

Noong nakalipas na ilang linggo, nagkaroon ng biru-biruan sa Montreal na medyo tumahimik daw at naging payapa ang Filipino community sa nasabing siyudad dahil wala roon si Parading na awtomatiko nang pinaghinalaan na pinagsisimulan ng gulo at sigalot sa nasabing komunidad. Paminsan-minsan ay napagdidiskitahan din ang inyong lingkod, lalung-lalo na ng mga taong nasasagasaan ng aking mga maaanghang nguni't prangkang kuru-kuro.

Sa kasawiang palad, hindi nagtagal ang pansamantalang katahimikan dahil hindi naglaon at bumalik na si Parading mula sa kanyang pakikipaglibing sa Pilipinas sa kanyang kapatid na namatay dulot ng mabagsik na kanser. May mga nagtanong pa nga kung bakit iyon pang kapatid ang pumanaw na para bagang meron silang iba na ninanais nilang mamatay. Pagkabalik na pagkabalik daw ni Parading, muling nabulabog at naligalig ang matiwasay na sanang komunidad, lalung-lalo na nang napabalita na patatalsikin daw si Au Osdon ng diumano'y mala-Mafiang "sindikato" ni Cesar Manuel para umupo ang makulit nilang lider bilang presidente ng FAMAS. Sabihin pa, si Parading ang pinaghinalaan na may pakana ng kumalat na black propaganda. Knowing how treacherously the Woman of the Year and Maawaka Awardee works behind the scene, people's suspicion is probably justified. Mayroon na kasi s'yang mahabang kasaysayan ng panlalait at panggugulo kaya s'ya kaagad ang unang-unang napapagbintangan na pasimuno.

PARADING: MORE A SHILL THAN SUPPORTER

I'm not at all surprised that even up to now, after more than four months have elapsed since the last FAMAS election, Parading is still desperately shilling for Cesar Manuel, especially that James de la Paz got the position she was covetous about. James' election to the chairmanship of the FAMAS Board of Trustees has effectively dashed her hope of ever taking a firm hold of FAMAS through Manuel and the BOT. In view of their mutual enmity, James' chairmanship is particularly unpalatable for megalomaniac Parading to swallow. Now that the BOT chairmanship is no longer available to Parading for the next four years, Manuel remains her only ticket to keeping herself in power or anything else that resembles it. Kung makakaupo nga naman si Manuel bilang presidente, controlling and hubristic Parading would be the power behind the throne, and FAMAS would become virtually hers dahil didiktahan n'ya nang didiktahan ang pobre kung anu-ano ang dapat gawin na tulad ng ginagawa n'ya sa presidente ng Federation na ngayon ay isa nang mistulang ghost

organization that is existing only on artificial respiration. However, Dick Dahiroc would most likely assert himself, too. Sigurado ako na hindang-hindi palalamang si Ginoong Dimakainglis kay Parading. That would inevitably cause friction between the two egotists, and Manuel would be caught in the middle of two colliding boulders. They would then need a fetal priest to patch things up for their common survival. That priest couldn't possibly be Salvador Cabugao because he has his own self-interest and egotistic tendency to satisfy. Besides, he has an account to settle with both Parading and Magallanes. A few years ago, Cabugi's office in Cote des Neiges area was raided by the RCMP and the Parading/Magallanes tandem was reported to be the one responsible for the raid since they were the ones who snitched on him. Not only that, it was the same tandem that had a hand in Cabugi's ouster as honorary consul. As if the injury they inflicted on the former diplomat wasn't enough, the evil duo even allegedly spread out the rumor that Cabugi had a torrid affair with someone whose surname begins with "R" and who looked like his wife who was still in the Philippines at the time.

It makes me wonder why after being badly maligned by Parading and Magallanes, Cabugi can still bring himself to associate with those two. Someday, he might be qualified for beatification for his apparent martyrdom, but not in the foreseeable future. It took more than 500 years before Pedro Calungsad of Cebu became eligible for sainthood.

They may be friends now, or appear to be, but theirs is a friendship of convenience, and that kind of friendship is superficial and usually doesn't last very long. That's why I'm adamant that FAMAS is much better off with Au Osdon as president and the present Executive Board, the executive board. They were in the first place the ones officially inducted into said offices. With Au at the helm, FAMAS is in a much, much more stable and healthier condition.

Parading and Ms. Osdon view FAMAS from totally divergent perspectives. From Parading's point of view, FAMAS is a cash cow and vehicle

See page 11 Any Which Way

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ni Mang Bert



bayaang linangin ng taong masipag, lupa'y asarolin at kahuya'y ikalat.

Ang mga buto ko ay bago matunaw, mauwi sa wala at kusang maparam, alabok na iyong latag ay bayaang siya ang babalang doo'y makipisan.

Kung magkagayon ma'y, alintanahin na ako sa limot iyong ihabilin, pagka't himpapawid at ang panganorin, mga lansangan mo'y aking lilibutin.

Matining na tunog ako sa dinig mo, ilaw, mga kulay, masamyong pabango, ang ugong at awit, paghibik ko sa iyo, pag-asang dalisay ng pananalig ko.

Bayang iniirong, sakit niyaring hirap, Katagalugan kong pinakaliliyag, dinggin mo ang aking pagpapahimakas; diya'y iiwan ko sa iyo ang lahat.

Ako'y patutungo sa walang busabos, walang umiinis at berdugong hayop; pananalig doo'y di nakasasalat, si Bathala lamang doo'y haring lubos.

Paalam, magulang at mga kapatid kapilas ng aking kaluluwa't dibdib mga kaibigan, bata pang maliit, sa aking tahanan di na masisilip.

Pag-papasalamat at napahinga rin, paalam estranherang kasuyo ko't aliw, paalam sa inyo, mga ginigiliw;

mamatay ay siyang pagkakagupiling!

Lalo nating pagyamanin ang mga aral at kagitingan ni hinirang na bayani ang isulat ng isang batikang Rizalista, si Rafael Palma, ika-apat na Pangulo nga Pamantasan ng Pilipinas sa talambuhay ni Dr. Rizal, na normal ang pulso ng ating magiting na bayani bago siya barilin.

NyuYir Resolusyon nina Pechay at Pichu

Pechay: Manigong Bagong Taon, Kuya Pichu!

Pichu: Lalim naman kaagad ng Tagalog mo. Hapinyuyir lang puwede na sabi ng Lelong natin.

Pechay: Ikaw ha! Nang-aasar ka na naman. Ano ba ang Nyu Yir Resolusyon mo?

Pichu: Aba! Para OK na OK ako sa lahat hinding-hindi ako magsisinungaling. At ikaw?

Pechay: Lalong OK ako sa lahat dahil hinding-hindi ko na dudumihan ang lampin ko.

Pichu: Sinungaling!

Nang ipinid ang taong 2011 ay ipinagdiwang ang ika-115 taong kamatayan ng ating Bayaning Pambansa. Si Dr. Jose P. Rizal ay binaril sa Bagumbayan noong Disyembre 30, 1896. Nag-iwan siya ng pamamaalam na tulang sinulat niyang "Mi Ultimo Adios" na itinago sa lamparang gamit niya sa selda. Naibulong niya ito sa kaniyang maybahay na si Josephine Bracken at siyang nagbigay-pahintulot kay Andres Bonifacio na isalin ito sa Tagalog upang lalong maunawaan ng nakararami. Sa ngayon, ay mahigit na sa 100 ang salin sa iba't-ibang lengguwahe sa buong mundo ng napakagandang tula na taglay ang walang kamatayang mensahe. Ating basahin at isaloob ang damdamin at kahulugan ng nilalaman nito.

"Mi Ultimo Adios" (Sa Tagalog) PAHIMAKAS ni Dr. Jose Rizal Sa salin ni Andres Bonifacio



Huling Paalam

Pinipintuho kong Bayan ay paalam, Lupang iniirong ng sikat ng araw, mutyang mahalaga sa dagat Silangan, kaluwahatiang sa ami'y pumanaw.

Masayang sa iyo'y aking idudulot ang lanta kong buhay na lubhang malungkot; maging maringal man at labis ang aliindog sa kagalingan mo ay akin ding handog.

Sa pakikidigma at pamimiyapis ang alay ng iba'y ang buhay na kipkip, walang agam-agam, maluwag sa dibdib, matamis sa puso at di ikahahapis.

Saan man mautas ay di kailangan, cipres o laurel, lirio ma'y patungan pakikipaghamok, at ang bibitayan, yaon ay gayon din kung hiling ng Bayan.

Ako'y mamamatay, ngayong namamalas na sa Silangan ay namamanaag yaong maligayang araw na sisikat sa likod ng luksang nagtabing na ulap.

Ang kulay na pula kung kinakailangan

na maitina sa iyong liwayway, dugo ko'y isaboy at siyang ikikinang ng kislap ng iyong maningning na ilaw.

Ang aking adhika sapul magkaisip noong kasalukuyang bata pang maliit, ay ang tanghaling ka at minsang masilip sa dagat Silangan hiyas na marikit.

Natuyo ang luhang sa mata'y nunukal, taas na ang noo't walang kapootan, walang bakas kunot ng kapighatian gabahid man dungis niyong kahihyan.

Sa kabuhayan ko ang laging gunita maningas na aking ninanasa-nasa ay guminhawa ka ang hiyas ng diwa paghingang papanaw ngayong biglang-bigla.

Ikaw'y guminhawa laking kagandahang ako'y malugmok, at ikaw ay matanghal, hininga'y malagot, mabuhay ka lamang bangkay ko'y maisilong sa iyong Kalangitan.

Kung sa libingan ko'y tumubong mamalas sa malagong damo mahinhing bulaklak, sa mga labi mo'y mangyayaring ilapat, sa kaluluwa ko halik ay igawad.

At sa aking noo nawa'y iparamdam, sa lamig ng lupa ng aking libingan, ang init ng iyong paghingang dalisay at simoy ng iyong paggiliw na tunay.

Bayaang ang buwan sa aki'y ititig ang liwanag niyang lamlam at tahimik, liwayway bayaang sa aki'y ihatid magalaw na sinag at hanging hagibis.

Kung sakasakaling bumabang humantong sa krus ko'y dumapo kahit isang ibon, doon ay bayaan humuning hinahon at dalitin niya payapang panahon.

Bayaan ang ningas ng sikat ng araw ula'y pasingawin noong kainitan, magbalik sa langit ng buong dalisay kalakip ng aking pagdaing na hiyaw.

Bayaang sino man sa katotong giliw tangisang maagang sa buhay pagkitil; kung tungkol sa akin ay may manalangin idalangin, Bayan, yaring pagkahimbing.

Idalanging lahat yaong nangamatay, Nangag-tiis hirap na walang kapantay; mga ina naming walang kapalaran na inihibik ay kapighatian.

Ang mga balo't pinapangulila, ang mga bilanggong nagsisipagdusa; dalangin namang kanilang makita ang kalayaan mong ikaginhawa.

At kung ang madilim na gabing mapanglaw ay lumaganap na doon sa libinga't tanging mga patay ang nangaglalamay, huwag bagabagin ang katahimikan.

Ang kanyang hiwaga'y huwag gambalain; kaipala'y marinig doon ang tagiting, tunog ng gitara't salterio'y magsaliw, ako, Bayan yao't kita'y aawitan.

Kung ang libingan ko'y limot na ng lahat at wala ng kurus at batong mabakas,



"Kuya Pichu, tiyak mo bang hindi tayo sasabog?"

Death Anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Rizal Commemorated in Ottawa and Montreal

by Bert Santos

To commemorate the 115th death anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Rizal, a wreath laying ceremony was held at Gatineau City Hall last December 30. Cautious driving slowed down the Knights of Rizal from Montreal to reach the event but were on time to hear Mr. Leslie B. Gatan, the new Philippine Ambassador to Canada welcomed them to the Tahanang Rizal in Ottawa and then treated them to a native Filipino breakfast.

The official residence of the ambassador was the site of the knighting and induction rites of three consuls and two staff members of the

consulate. Commander Sir Rey L. Balansi, Order of the Knights of Rizal, Montreal Chapter dabbed into knighthood Consul General Sir Neil Frank Ferrer, Consul Sir Eric Tamayo, Consul Sir Porfirio Mayo, Jr., Messrs. Miguel Luis Moreno and Albert Jerome Ilagan.

Induction of the ladies to the Kababaihang Rizalista, Inc. was presided over by Lady Esphe Manaog Balansi, Vice-President of the Montreal Chapter. Ladies who took the oath of allegiance were led by Mrs. Lydia

See Page 11 Dr. Jose Rizal



Western Union - Investor Relations - Press Release

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Western Union Provides Philippine Disaster Aid

Western Union, its Agents and Foundation initiate coordinated response

ENGLEWOOD, Colo.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 23, 2011-- In response to the catastrophic flooding caused by Tropical Storm Washi in the Southern Philippines, the Western Union Company (NYSE:WU) today announced a coordinated disaster-aid effort to help Filipino flood victims.

The disaster response includes a Western Union Foundation grant totaling US\$100,000 and dedicated employee and Agent giving programs with a corporate match. All donations and grants will be directed to the Philippines Red Cross. In addition, participating Western Union Agent locations worldwide will offer "no transfer fee" transactions to prompt consumer giving.

Direct Support through Grantmaking

The Western Union Foundation will give an initial financial contribution of US\$30,000 to the Philippines Red Cross, which is providing flood survivors with basic necessities such as safe drinking water, food, blankets and first aid.

Three Western Union Agents in the Philippines have joined the call for support. Universal Storefront Services Corporation, Petnet Incorporated and eBusiness Services, Inc. have collectively donated US \$35,000. With the company's match and the initial grant from the Western Union Foundation, a total of US\$100,000 will be donated to the Philippines Red Cross.

Western Union is actively encouraging its other global Agents, businesses that offer the company's financial services, to join together in supporting relief efforts. Western Union will provide a dollar-for-dollar match of Agent contributions to the Western Union Foundation disaster relief fund.

According to government officials, more than 1,000 people have lost their lives and hundreds of thousands more are missing or displaced.

"We are deeply saddened by the magnitude of human suffering caused by this natural disaster," said Patricia Rinngen, Western Union senior vice president, Pacific and Indochina. "We are moving quickly to determine how we can best assist our Agents, their local communities and their employees, some of whom have been directly impacted by this record storm. We also are looking to leverage the unique combination of our Agent network, our brand, our consumer relationships, our compassionate employees and the resources of the Western Union Foundation to provide broad-based aid during these most trying circumstances."

Mobilizing Consumer Giving

Western Union is enabling consumers around the world to give to the Philippines Red Cross as part of a "no transfer fee" program using the Western Union® Quick Collect®, Quick PaySM, or Payments Service through participating Western Union® Agent locations. Consumers need to complete the blue form, using "WESTERN UNION FOUNDATION" as the Pay To recipient; "WUFOUNDATIONCO" as the Code City; and "PHILIPPINES" as the Account number. This consumer-giving option will be available through Jan. 30, 2012. The Western Union Foundation does not charge any overhead or administration fees, so all funds given to the Foundation will go directly to the Philippines Red Cross.

"In the normal course of business, Western Union creates shared value by offering a range of reliable financial services that help consumers and businesses prosper and build better lives," said Patricia Rinngen. "It's gratifying to know that during times of crisis we can put some of those same services to work in a way that can help people during their greatest time of need."

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Western Union - Investor Relations - Press Release

To encourage and support employee philanthropy, Western Union, through the Western Union Foundation, has created a special relief fund. Western Union will match all employee donations two-for-one for U.S. based employees and three-for-one for all other company employees around the world.

Employees and consumers can give online by using the "Donate Now" button at www.westernunionfoundation.org.

"It's part of Western Union's heritage to provide assistance in the aftermath of natural disasters, and that remains a key component of the Western Union Foundation's giving today," said Luella Chavez D'Angelo, senior vice president of Western Union Social Ventures and president of the Western Union Foundation. "When devastation strikes, we strive to be there to help communities on the road to recovery."

*Western Union makes money on the exchange of currencies.

About Western Union

The Western Union Company (NYSE: WU) is a leader in global payment services. Together with its Vigo, Orlandi Valuta, Pago Facil and Western Union Business Solutions branded payment services, Western Union provides consumers and businesses with fast, reliable and convenient ways to send and receive money around the world, to send payments and to purchase money orders. The Western Union, Vigo and Orlandi Valuta branded services are offered through a combined network of approximately 485,000 agent locations in 200 countries and territories. In 2010, The Western Union Company completed 214 million consumer-to-consumer transactions worldwide, moving \$76 billion of principal between consumers, and 405 million business payments. For more information, visit www.westernunion.com.

About the Western Union Foundation

Through Western Union's *Our World, Our Family*® signature program, the Western Union Foundation supports initiatives to empower people through access to economic opportunity. Recognized by the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy in 2009, the program is a five-year, \$50 million commitment reflecting efforts made by Western Union employees, agents and partners around the world. Since its inception, the Western Union Foundation has awarded more than \$73.8 million in grants to 2033 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in 120 countries and territories. To learn more, visit www.westernunionfoundation.org.

WU-G WU-P

Source: Western Union

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From Page 8 Any Which Way

for her megalomania and love for publicity; from Ms. Osdon's, it is an effective tool to serve the community responsibly and unselfishly, and without consciously seeking publicity for her accomplishments and charitable deeds.

ONLI IN DA PILIPINS – Last December, Chinese authorities executed a 35-year-old Filipino man in southern China after he was convicted of drug trafficking. That in spite of the entreaty made personally to the Chinese government by Philippines Vice-Pres. Jejomar Binay on the behest of Pres. Noynoy Aquino. Not too long after that, three Chinese locked up in a Paranaque City jail for illegal drug-related offenses escaped with ... listen to this ... the help of the guards who were supposed to keep them incarcerated in the first place. Thus, the joke in the Philippines now is that a Filipino who committed a major crime in China is convicted and eventually executed while a Chinese who is jailed in the Philippines for similar crime is soon allowed to go scot-free by the people who are supposed to guard him.

Magpapakawala ng mga dayuhang drug ring members alang-alang sa pera samantalang may mga kababayan tayong binibitay ng ibang bansa dahil sa katulad na kaso. Paano at bakit nangyayari ito? Pera-perang usapan. Nakakahiya tayo at nakakaawa rin. Kinalimutan na ng ilan nating kababayan ang pagiging Filipino at ibinenta na pati ang

kinabukasan ng mga nabibiktima ng illegal drugs kapalit ng pera. Sa mata ng mundo, anong klaseng lahi tayo? No wonder why my benighted native country is in deep sugar-honey-iced-tea. By the way, that 35-year-old guy is the fourth Filipino to be executed in China in 2011 while the Chinese inmates are the umpteenth Chinese allowed to run off a Philippine jail. At saka agrabiyado tayo ng Tsina dahil merong death penalty roon, sa Pilipinas ay wala.

HINDI NA NAMAN N'YA SINAGOT ANG TANONG KO – Hindi n'yo ba napansin na hindi na naman sinagot ni Fraud ang tanong ko kung UP graduate nga ba s'yang talaga o hindi? Sinagot n'ya ang buong kolum ko maliban 'yung tungkol sa kanyang pagiging o hindi pagiging graduate ng University of the Philippines, kung ano ang tinapos n'yang kurso at kung anong taon s'ya nagtapos. Hinamon ko rin s'ya na ilathala n'ya sa Forum ang kanyang UP diploma. Hindi n'ya ginawa. Ilang beses na rin n'yang denedma ang mga tanong ko.

Ano nga kaya't pumunta ako sa UP sa Diliman at ipasaliksik ko ang record ni Fraud sa Office of the Registrar? Posible naman siguro iyon nang hindi lalabag sa batas. Puwede rin siguro akong magtanong sa National Statistic Office (NSO).

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From Page 9 Dr. Jose Rizal

Debbie Mijares Gatan, wife of the ambassador, followed by Ladies Bernardita Ladrica, Merlita Halili, Emmie Fairweather, Nora Arriola, Myrna Rosales, and Mary Joyce Tamayo.

A viewing of film depicting the life of Dr. Jose P. Rizal followed. Soon after, luncheon was served before the knights from Montreal hurried back home for their own rites held at the FAMAS Center assisted by the Kababaihang Rizalista, Inc. headed by Lady Merle Valiente.

Sirs Rey Balansi and John

Linden took turns in announcing the Chapter's activities for the coming months which includes the official selection of a Maria Clara.

Dr. Gene Santander is the first President of the Kababaihang Rizalista, Inc. designated by Lina and Tony Fernandez, its organizers.

Dr. Santander delivered a brief inspirational talk. She pointed out that the organization pioneered with four ladies.

About 50 people attended the event.



L-R the new Knights of Rizal in kneeling position: Sir A. J. Ilagan, Sir M. L. Moreno, Consul Sir P. Mayo, Jr., Consul Sir E. Tamayo and Consul General Sir N. F. Ferrer, (Photo taken in Ottawa). (Courtesy: Bert Santos)



Standing (L-R) Sir John Linden, and Commander Sir Rey Balansi. (Photo taken in Montreal at the FAMAS Center). Courtesy: Bert Santos



Photo-op of members of OKOR (Order of the Knights of Rizal) - L-R: Sir Rey Balansi, Chapter Commander, Sir Flor Rillo, Sir Fred Villarino, Sir Dario Boco, Sir Ed Valdez, and Sir Ed de la Cuadra.



Sir Ambassador Leslie Gatan placing the Ladies of Rizal medal on Lady Debbie Gatan during the induction of new members in Ottawa, December 30, 2011.



Lady Merle Valiente delivering a brief message before performing the wreath laying ceremony to commemorate Dr. Jose Rizal's 115th death anniversary. (Montreal, Dec. 30/11)

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Inside view of the new location of Marché Coop under the same roof as Gilmore College International on 5320-A Queen Mary Road where there are many other businesses - banks, restaurants, fruit stores, etc.

KNIGHTS OF RIZAL

Commemoration of Dr. Jose Rizal's 115th death anniversary, December 30, 2011 in Ottawa & Montreal

Photos: Courtesy of Alberto Baens Santos



Start of the initiation ceremony led by Sir Rey L. Balansi, Chapter Commander



Oath taking of new members of the Order of the Knights of Rizal led by Sir Dario Boco.



Commander Sir Rey Balansi dubbing the sword to the new member



Photo-op after the ceremony with Sir Ambassador Leslie Gatan



Souvenir photo of Sir Ambassador Leslie Gatan and his wife with the Chapter Commander Sir Rey Balansi and other OKOR members.



Photo-op of the new members of the Kababaihang Rizalista



Photo taken during the Invocation



Sir John Linden calling the members of OKOR and Kababaihang Rizalista for picture taking at the FAMAS Hall, Montreal, December 30, 2011.

PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

Emilee is a Filipina making a name for herself in Canadian theater scene

by W.G.Quiambao

If New York has Lea Salonga in Miss Saigon, Montreal has Emilee Veluz in Miss Orient(ed). But what do they have in common? There are both Filipina actresses. Both won accolades and recognition for their respective roles. Salonga received the Toni Award for Best Actress and Veluz won for the Montreal Mirror's Best of Montreal 2005 Second Best Local Actress.

Veluz knew that she wanted to be a stage actress when her parents gave her a record of the Broadway version of Grease. "I would listen to it all the time," said Veluz who was born here. "Since then, I knew I had a passion for performing. I'd always wanted to entertain. Growing up, I took singing and ballet lessons and joined the Drama Club when I was attending Villa Maria High School. I did everything I could to educate myself on how to become a professional performer".

Through the recommendation of a teacher who saw her talent and potential to be a successful stage



Emilee Veluz

actress, she then studied in the Professional Theatre Program at Dawson College where she was an honor student.

After graduation, she was hired by Geordie Productions in a play titled, "A Promise is a Promise". In addition, she was later hired to join the cast of other tour titled, "The Paperbag Princess and other stories by Robert Munsch" which toured Eastern Canada and U.S. Other credits include Pixcom's production L'Odysee (A Species Odyssey) and Into the Waves for Baddies in Bad Times Theatre in Toronto.

Veluz, who likes drama and

musical/comedy, also performed with Teesri Duniya Theatre which gave her a breakthrough role when she was casted as Twinkle in the Montreal production of Miss Orient(ed). She was voted as Second Best Actress of Montreal for her role as Twinkle, a beauty contestant and the play was voted as Best Play in 2005 by Montreal Mirror's poll.

Veluz's effusive style and charming sense of humour won her attention and slew of new fans. She recalls a fan who kept staring at her after the show. She asked, "Did you like the play?" The little girl answered, "I just want to be Twinkle when I grow up."

Veluz finds it very competitive in the entertainment business. "Role models for female Filipinos are scarce," said Veluz. "Because you're Asian, you are usually typed casted. Basically, if you're a visible minority, forget about T.V. There's really nothing for you. At least in theatre, you've got the freedom as an artist to write your own material and present it and that's exactly what the playwrights of Miss Orient(ed) did."

She added this, "If you want to pursue a career in theatre, go out there and watch as much live theatre as you can. Get the proper theatre training that you need. And not only is it important to know how to perform on the stage, but it is equally

important to know all the work it takes to put a show on the stage."

According to Veluz, theatre and film are two very different forms of art. Theatre is live in front of an audience and as an actor you always have to be "in the moment". If there is a technical glitch, for example, you as that character in the play have to deal with that situation at that very moment and try to incorporate it in the story; without losing focus.

Veluz, who has taught drama in elementary and high schools around Montreal, is currently working at Teesri Duniya Theatre as Artistic Associate and Assistant General Manager. She will be the Artistic Director of a new project called The Neighborhood Theatre, which is a project in partnership with Concordia University and local communities in Montreal.

Meanwhile, she is finishing her first play called "Oui Non, We Know", a comedy about a Filipino and French Canadian newly engaged couple, whose parents are meeting for the first time.

Teesri Duniya Theatre is always looking for fresh new talent. For more information visit their website, www.teesriduniya.com or you can contact them by email at info@teesriduniya.com

From Page 5 Japan-Philippines

rights associations, and many more—have been noted to be helping social development causes in the homeland.

Of some P2.5 billion of donations coursed through the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LinKaPil) program of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), some P33.65 million came from Filipino and non-Filipino donors based in Japan.

These are on top of the remittances that Filipinos in Japan send back home: From 2001 to 2010, the US\$5.349 billion is way, way ahead of Japanese development aid and foreign direct investment coming from Japan. Even in the last three years when the world faced a global economic crisis, Filipinos in Japan sent record-high amounts.

With these episodes surrounding Philippines-Japan relations and the Filipino migration to Japan that went with it, what future is in store?

Japan might need to continually depend on foreign labor given their declining birth rates. It might also compel Japanese authorities to be more open to the contributions of foreigners and, if possible, respect foreigners' (and Filipinos') rights.

For the Philippines, under a new chapter of citizens emigrating to Japan, it might mean that the episodes of forced migration to Japan—a la Sioson—should be over. Probably, helping more Filipinos in Japan and decrepit compatriots in the Philippines, as well as fostering better mutual relations between Japanese and

Filipinos, may be the next steps.

But for both countries, Japanese and Filipino vigilance to collaborate and help address the welfare of Filipinos in Japan and in the Philippines is a logical next step. This is where, for example, the Philippines-Japan NGO Partnership (PJP) is working with the Japan-Philippines NGO Network (JPN, a network of Japanese NGOs with projects in the Philippines) is doing something about it. Or Philippine rural communities welcoming Japanese citizens and enjoying their company and friendship in areas with visible concentrations of Japanese.

The migration story concerning Filipinos heading to Japan is evolving, with development outcomes affecting both countries and their citizens. Opportunities abound from this evolution, and these can excite the Filipinos in Japan and the compatriots at home who are concerned about their welfare and of a homeland's hopes for a better future.

Carmelita G. Nuqui and Jeremaiah M. Opiniano are executive directors of the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) and the Institute for Migration and Development Issues (IMDI), respectively. Both migrant-oriented nonprofits are members of the Philippines-Japan NGO Partnership.

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Sunken cruise ship 'may still hold survivors'

Emergency crews have been working through the night around the wreck of the Costa Concordia, but fears are growing for the people still missing.



the Costa Concordia, but fears are growing for the people still missing.

Eleven people are known to have died after the Costa Concordia crashed into rocks off Italy's west coast on Friday night.

But local coastguard Marco Brusco said there was still a "glimmer of hope" that survivors could be found.

The ship's owners blame the captain, saying he changed the ship's course.

Because the ship was right at the start of its voyage, its fuel tanks are almost full - and people are worried about the fuel leaking out into the sea, causing environmental damage.

But the company that's in

charge of dealing with the fuel says the tanks are intact and there's no risk of a

leak at the moment.

The missing are thought to include four crew members, as well as passengers from America, Germany, France and Italy.

The ship's captain, Francesco Schettino, has been arrested and a judge is due to decide if he should still be held.

Captain Schettino said he'd done nothing wrong, saying the rocks the ship hit were not marked on his nautical charts.

The ship, carrying 4,300 passengers and crew, was on the first night of a cruise when it ran aground in calm conditions. breakfast?

Philippine Cuisine and Favorite Food

Compiled by Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

Philippine Dishes for a Healthier Life Style

With the New Year, it's time to make changes and adopt healthier and wiser choices, not only in managing one's finances but also in the way we prepare our meals. After all, we are what we eat. This column will not only offer you appetizing dishes but also some guidelines in making them healthier. Is there such a thing as a healthy Filipino dish? Some people are skeptical about the idea since most dishes are loaded with oil, salt and sugar. But if we make an attempt to reduce these ingredients in our dishes, they will still be delicious. Our palate will get used to the taste of healthier food.

I found the following dishes that are more appropriate to the reduction of oil and salt.

Chicken, being the most popular among all cultures, has been



Tinola (Chicken with vegetables)

chosen because of the variety of dishes possible to be made from it. Tinola (a kind of soup made from chicken mixed with vegetables) is a very common dish in the Philippines. It is characterized by the taste of ginger and hot broth which makes any meal quite satisfying even during

summer weather but most specially during cold spells of the winter season. The following are the ingredients for this dish:

- 1 Tablespoon Oil (instead of 2)
- 1 1/2 Tablespoon finely minced garlic
- 1/4 cup finely minced onion
- 1 tablespoon peeled and minced ginger root (I added more than this)
- 2 lbs bone less, skin less chicken breasts (trimmed of fat and cut to bite size pieces). Although chicken wings or legs can be used, it is healthier to use chicken breasts for health reasons.
- 1 tsp salt (already reduced from 1 tsp)
- ground black pepper
- 2 Tablespoon patis or salt Low Sodium Dish!
- 3 Cups Water or 49 oz of low sodium canned chicken broth
- 2 cups cubed green papaya
- 2 small Cheyote Squash, cubed
- 2 cups spinach leaves

Directions

- Saute the onion, garlic and ginger in the oil over medium-low heat for about 1 - 2 mins until onions are translucent and garlic is golden brown.
- Add chicken pieces and stir well until chicken is partly cooked.
- Season with salt, pepper or patis.
- Add the broth/water.
- Cover and let simmer over moderate heat until chicken is tender (approx. 30 - 45 mins)
- Uncover pot and add the Cheyote, for for another 15 - 20 mins, until the veggies are tender.
- Turn off heat and add the spinach leaves.

Most Filipinos love to eat



Chicken Curry

chicken dishes especially the curry. The chicken curry is very popular dish during birthdays, wedding receptions, town fiestas, and other special occasions. But why wait for these occasions to happen instead we can serve this special dish anytime we want to. The cooking procedure of chicken curry is very simple and their ingredients are also less expensive.

The Filipino-style chicken curry recipe is almost the same to any curries in the world. It's their spices/seasonings probably which make this curry tasty and special to every pinoy.

Ingredients:

- 2 or 3 tbsp. cooking oil
- 3 pcs. peeled potatoes
- 1 lb chicken, cut it into servings
- 3 minced garlic cloves

- 1 quartered onion
- 2 or 3 tbsp. curry powder
- salt and pepper
- 1 fresh red bell pepper
- 1 fresh green bell pepper
- 1 cup of water
- 1 pc sliced carrot
- 1 cup coconut milk or evaporated milk
- 1 tbsp patis/fish sauce

Procedures:

- Fry potatoes using hot cooking oil. When done, set aside first and place them in a bowl.
- Then, fry chicken pieces using the same oil until it become brownish in color.
- Add the garlic and onion together. Let it sauté for few minutes until soften.
- Pour the patis/fish sauce. Put salt and pepper with the curry powder. Stir it until properly mixed.
- Add 1 cup of water. Cover the pan and let it to boil. Adjust the heat into low level; add the red and green sliced bell peppers together. Also with the fried potatoes and sliced carrots. Simmer for at least 3 minutes.
- Add milk and stir occasionally. Note: Be careful when using evaporated milk to avoid it from becoming curled with the liquids. Just cook it for 7 minutes or less.
- Serve it while still hot!

Ingredients:



Filipino Fruit Salad

- 2 (30 ounce) cans fruit cocktail , drained
- 1 (12 ounce) can pineapple chunks , drained
- 1 (12 ounce) can mandarin oranges , drained
- 2 bananas , sliced
- 1 apple , diced small
- 1 pear , diced small
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese at room temperature (may substitute neufatchel cheese)
- 1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk (nestle is best)
- 1 cup coconut (optional) or 1 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Directions:

1. Beat cream cheese until softened and add condensed milk in small quantities until desired consistency to coat the fruit is achieved. Make sure all fruit is well drained and fold each fruit into cream cheese and milk mixture until well incorporated.
2. Chill in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour before serving.
3. Add nuts and/or coconut shortly before serving

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FILIPINO STAR SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Ruffa: 'I'm single and happy!'



Poised for another busy year is Ruffa Gutierrez.

The Kapatid TV host-actress spent Christmas and the New Year with her family in Los Angeles and New York where she took time to unwind and get energized for upcoming projects.

"My daughters (Lorin and Venice) requested to see snow because it's been a long time since they last saw snow in Istanbul. So I really looked for [a place where there is] snow because it's difficult especially in California to find snow. The girls had their first ski lessons," Ruffa intimated to Bulletin Entertainment and some members of the press in a recent interview in Cebu City.

Certified single

In the same interview, the "Paparazzi" host was asked what makes her bloom these days.

"I'm single! And happy! Walang sakit sa ulo," Ruffa declared.

Being in a relationship is not a priority for Ruffa. Not that she doesn't go out on dates. She said she's waiting for the right timing to find the perfect "lifetime partner."

"I'm so happy being single talaga. When I listen to my girlfriends and they talk about their bad experiences in a relationship, ay naku, I'm just so happy that I'm alone. It's a choice," she explained.

Ruffa's prayer for 2012 is that "sana huwag akong ma-distract."

"What happened last year was blown out of proportion. Akala ng mga tao ang laki-laking problem na," she said, referring to her involvement with the John Lloyd Cruz-Shaina Magdayao

brouhaha.

Asked about the foreigner-businessman she has been dating, Ruffa revealed: "He's leaving eh. The problem with expats that live here [in the Philippines], at the end of the day, their contract expires and they leave. Eh I'm not ready to leave the country anytime soon because I have contracts. My annulment is not finished yet. I'm not allowed to start a new life with anyone yet. You know, you just have to use your brain. How do you continue naman with someone who's leaving na?"

Nonetheless, Ruffa said that she's patient enough to wait for someone whom she might end up with for life.

"My peg has changed. What's important is a God fearing individual. We live in a fallen world and for you to really last in a relationship, you have to have God in your life, the same value you use, same beliefs. Kasi if you don't pray together and you don't have the same values, mawawala din yan kasi there's temptation. And it's hard these days," she remarked citing Maricel Pangilinan's family as her ideal family.

Sole provider

Being a single working mom for her daughters, Ruffa said that it's quite difficult because "I'm their mom and dad at the same time."

Ruffa revealed they don't get any financial support from Yilmaz, leaving her as her family's sole provider.

She said her girls, Lorin, 8, and Venice, 7, already know why their parents separated. ■

It's Hollywood or bust for Sam Milby



Sam Milby

Sam Milby admits that he is apprehensive about his plan to move to New York next month in order to pursue a career in Hollywood.

A big reason is that he dreads that his fans here might forget about him in his absence.

"Siyempre, nandun yung kaba," said he in a report on PEP. "Napaka-importante talaga na nakikita ka ng tao sa TV. So, it's something that you do fear."

Despite his trepidation, Milby knows that the chance to shine in the international stage is something he can't afford to pass up.

"Opportunities like this don't come for anyone," he acknowledged.

But as to what that "opportunity" actually is, Milby is keeping mum, admitting only to having done an "audition" that was "liked" by a "station."

Apparently, as Milby himself would reveal, nothing is concrete as yet in relation to an actual project.

"But still, the fact that the station really liked it [the audition], it's really a big thing na din," he pointed out.

"I'm not expecting, but I'm very, very hopeful. Ayokong iniisip ng mga tao, 'Anong project ang gagawin ni Sam sa States, e, wala pa naman.'

Pero I just pray that I will get a project," he added.

First thing, though, is that he has to find a talent agent to represent him.

"Yeah, one of the hardest things is finding an agency," he mullied aloud.

When compared with actor Jericho Rosales, who, last year, successfully penetrated the international film market via the indie, "Subject: I Love You," Milby was more than cordial.

"Expected naman 'yun," he said. "He's [Jericho] actually ahead of me kasi may nagawa na siyang Hollywood movie, so that's a big thing already. I'm very, very happy for him and I hope that things will work out for him too.

"Pero ayoko ng comparison. No matter who makes it to another country, that's our success, the Philippines, para yun sa buong Pilipinas."

Milby's New York stint will last for three months. ■

Regine and Ogie's son's star-studded christening



Among the ninongs and ninangs sighted in the baptism were **Judy Ann Santos, Kris Aquino, Sen. Bong Revilla & Rep. Lani Mercado, Manny Pacquiao, Dindong Dantes, Gilberto Duavit, and Cacai Velasquez.**

The christening of Regine Velasquez and Ogie Alcasid's son, Nathan James was, to say the least, a very star-studded event.

Held at Don Bosco Church in Makati, Nathan James Alcasid's godfathers were Senator Bong Revilla, Jr., Cong. Manny Pacquiao, GMA president and CEO Jimmy Duavit, Dingdong Dantes, Raul Mitra and Ben Chan, while his godmothers were Kris Aquino, Judy Ann Santos, Cacai Velasquez, Ai Ai delas Alas, and Michelle Van Eimeren Murrow.

"Isa sa mga unang dumating ay ang parents ni Regine, sumunod si Cong. Manny Pacquiao, Cong. Lani Mercado, Juday and Ryan Agoncillo," Ruffa Mae Quinto

reported on "Showbiz Central," Jan. 22.

"Very, very cute. Congratulations. May Nate be very blessed with good health and happiness," Mr. Duavit said in a short message.

Kris assured that "bilang ninang niya, ngayon gusto ko lang siyang i-assure na for the rest of his life puwede niya akong maasahan. I'm just so grateful kay Ogie at kay Regine that they chose me to be a part of this very special occasion."

"Nagpapasalamat ako at isa ako sa napiling ninong. Of course sa ating bagong baby, welcome to the Christian world," Bong said.

Judy Ann believes that "ang daming taong nagmamahal sa kanya, panigurado 'yan."

Ogie called the baptism "a blessing."

"Tulad ng sinabi ni Father, from this day on my pledge that we will be good example to our baby...nakakatuwa naman 'yung mga ninong at ninang ni Nate dahil kumbaga, I could see na talagang sineseryoso nila 'yung role na binigay namin sa kanila. We're very thankful to them dahil nagpunta sila."

Regine was very happy that "Kristiyano na 'yung anak namin." ■

Enchong Dee the next recording star?



Enchong Dee

On top of being a prolific young actor and occasional dancer, Enchong Dee hopes to unleash his inner "Karaoke King" in the near future.

"Gusto kung sa gusto. Naunahan lang ako ni Anne [Curtis], eh," the 22-year-old star told PEP in jest about being a singer

"Kahit naman sinong Filipino, bigyan mo ng videoke diyan, uubusin 'yung limang piso sa wallet nila para lang makakanta nang makakanta.

"At isa ako dun!" he confessed.

Enchong revealed that he's been wanting to flex his singing muscles for the longest time. Fortunately, the "Maria la del Barrio" star's next movie project will not only require him to act but to hit some notes as well, which would enable him to tap on this "hidden talent" of his.

Meanwhile, Dee confessed that—as blind items noted—he and onscreen partner Erich Gonzales often encounter sporadic "tampuhans" on the set of their series. However, amid this issue, Dee underscored that these are only minor disagreements that "add spice" to their love team.

"Kumbaga, kahit naman siguro magkakapatid, nagkakaroon ng tampuhan.

"And I can say na magiging mas makulay 'yung relationship namin ni Erich. Kasi nga, may sweet part, may

bitter part, mayroong funny part... Kumbaga, kumpleto kami," explained Dee. "Napagdadaan na namin ang lahat."

In the same way that his onscreen love team has been "colorful," Dee's off cam love life could very well be described as equally vibrant. In his previous interviews, Dee's been forthright in admitting his admiration for actress Julia Montes. As a matter of fact, there were even rumors that they're already an official couple but they've been keeping it under wraps—something they neither confirm nor deny.

Now that Montes is being paired with multi-awarded actor Coco Martin in the new Kapamilya soap "Walang Hanggan," Dee was asked by PEP if he's jealous of their budding tandem.



Enchong maintains that he's not jealous of Julia-Coco tandem.

"Selos? No, I'm really happy for them," said Dee.

He even added that Martin is like an "older brother," which somehow renders the idea of being jealous "invalid."

"Magkaibigan kami ni Coco, nagkatrabaho kami sa 'Sa 'Yo Lamang.'

"Sabi niya sa akin, 'Kung may gusto kang gawing indie, tanungin mo lang ako. Tutulungan kita. Bibigyan kita ng advice kung okay ba, kung anong kuwento,'" recounted Dee.

If there's anything that Dee feels for Montes' and Martin's pairing, it's "happiness" because their project will allow Montes to finally take on a mature role; while Martin will get the chance to do a love story, something he has been hoping to do for some time now. ■

Claudine makes it up with fans; Solenn a hit among Cebuanos



Claudine Barretto

Making Up: Claudine Barretto sure knows how to make up with her public.

On Day Two of GMA Network's Sinulog-inspired free shows in Cebu (Jan. 13 and 14) held at the parking lot of SM Cebu, the controversial actress exerted extra effort to reach out to fans long after the show had finished.

based on the negative publicity that she has been getting of late. Claudine had not been well prior to the GMA show. That same day, her flight from Manila had been delayed by five hours.

While dressing up for the show, she was stressed furthermore when her dress burst as she tried to zip it up.

Claudine performed the last and the only one backed by a set of local dancers among the GMA artists present.

Solenn's A Hit: The biggest hit in the GMA Sinulog show was "Legacy" star Solenn Heussaff, who effortlessly won the crowd with her sexy looks and with-it presence. She connected well with the audience and impressed them with her singing. It helped that in that evening's line-up, she was the only one who could claim to being a singer having launched a maiden album in 2011.

The GMA free show also featured performances by "Survivor" castaways Stef Prescott, Chuckie Dreyfus, John Odulio, Mara Yokohama, Betong Sumaya and Maey Bautista; "Kung Aagawin Mo Ang Langit's" Michelle Madrigal; "Kokak's" TJ Trinidad, and Kapuso artists Ehra Madrigal and Bubbles Paraiso.

Joining them as event host is "Party Pilipinas" Isabelle Daza.

Claudine, Ehra, Michelle and Bubbles also joined the Kapuso float in the Grand Sinulog Parade the following day. ■



Solenn Heussaff

Claudine gamely did the rounds of the gallery, shook hands with men, women and children while posing with others for pictures. During the show, she thanked her fans, whom she called Claudinians for standing by her through thick and thin.

Still a bit overweight though, the actress seemed determined to woo back the public who may have had different impressions of her

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Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.17*

Luis Manzano, Patrick Garcia willing to work together



Patrick (L) is the father of Jennylyn Mercado's son, Alex Jazz, while Luis (R) is her current boyfriend

Given the chance, the current and former sweethearts of actress Jennylyn Mercado - Luis Manzano and Patrick Garcia, respectively - would like to work together, and even with the actress herself.

Manzano and Garcia said so during their first ever one-on-one interview aired on "Entertainment Live," Jan. 14.

Manzano asked Garcia, "Kung saka-sakali lang, bigyan ng pagkakataon na tawagin nating neutral ang lahat, papayag ka ba na gumawa ng isang proyekto kasama ako at si Jennylyn?"

With a laugh, the father of Mercado's son, Alex Jazz, quipped, "Depende sa 'yo?"

To which Luis replied, "Sa akin, okay lang, kaya 'kong magsulat ng script."

Garcia answered in the affirmative and the conversation on the possible project ended with Manzano saying, "Yes, [that would be] a very, very good project."

On Alex dabbling in showbiz

Garcia started his showbiz career as child star in the '90s Kapamilya gag-variety show, "Ang TV." His batchmates were Angelica Panganiban, John Prats,

Camille Prats, Kaye Abad, and Carlo Aquino, among others.

Taking the cue from there, Manzano asked: "Nakita ka ng mga manonood na bata ka pa lang, 'eh, nandito ka na sa ABS-CBN, nag-showbiz ka na. Given a chance, papayagan mo ba si Jazz na mag-showbiz?"

"Kung anong gusto niya, siya siguro magdedesisyon. Siguro kung gusto niyang mag-artista," replied Garcia.

Manzano pressed on by asking why there was "no hesitation at all" seeing that showbiz is "not exactly the nicest environment."

"Siguro kasi pag inaway nila si Jazz, si Jen ang makakalaban nila, lagot sila kay Jen. Siyempre poprotektahan ni Jen 'yung anak 'ko. Pero siguro kung ano talaga 'yung gusto ng anak 'ko," said Garcia.

Patrick's love life

In a previous Bulletin Entertainment report, Mercado nonchalantly revealed that Garcia already has a non-showbiz girlfriend whom he brings whenever he visits their son in her home.

Garcia confirmed this himself in a past "KrisTV" guesting. However, shortly after that interview, news broke out that Garcia has already broken up with the girlfriend before the episode was aired.

Asked about it, Garcia's curt reply was "hindi 'ko alam."

Manzano needled, "Ah, nasa grey area pa?"

"Yes, nasa grey area pa."

After the interview, PEP reported that Garcia noted the encounter as "okay naman."

"I know Luis quite some time naman, we were together before. And there's no tension or whatsoever between Luis and I, so there's no problem," explained Garcia. ■

Dennis, Jennylyn move on from messy breakup



Dennis Trillo wants to be friends with ex Jennylyn Mercado

Estranged couple Dennis Trillo and Jennylyn Mercado are now ready to let bygones be bygones.

Citing Dennis, "Unang Hirit" reported on Jan. 12 that the two "Party Pilipinas" mainstays have already spoken to one another on the set of said show last month.

Apparently, that had been the first time they did so after their separation early last year.

Although he did not disclose details of their meeting, Dennis said that he made the "first move" in order to ease the tension between them.

"N'ung time na 'yun, magpa-Pasko, so siyempre gusto ko rin na maging mapayapa lahat at panatag 'yung loob ng mga tao. Mahirap 'yung may kasamaan ka ng loob," he related.

Jennylyn earlier confirmed this on the New Year episode of "Showbiz Central," which she co-hosts.

"Okay na. Ibig sabihin parang... siyempre, kahit papa'no 'di ba, Christmas na at bagong

taon na. Kalimutan na natin 'yung mga nakaraang pagsubok at mga samaan ng loob," she said.

With this development, Dennis hopes to be friends again with his ex-girlfriend.

"Sana naman, oo. Kasi matagal na 'yun eh, 'di ba? Dapat nga 'di na pinag-uusapan 'yun eh kasi matagal na 'yun eh," said he.

Dennis and Jennylyn's almost one year-relationship ended in March last year. In May, Jennylyn

detailed the events of the night of their breakup in a YES! Magazine feature, confirming rumors that they parted ways after a petty fight escalated to violence.

Now, Jennylyn is in a relationship with ABS-CBN actor-host Luis Manzano. On the other hand, Dennis is persistently being linked to leading lady Bianca King. ■

Typhoon Sendong brings Cristalle Bello & Hayden Kho together



Cristalle Belo with children evacuees in Iligan City

Misery does love company.

Look at Hayden Kho Jr. and Cristalle Belo, daughter of Hayden's beloved Dr. Vicki Belo.

Despite their differences, on Dec. 22 last year, they went to Iligan City together to lend a helping hand to the Sendong victims. Derek Ramsay, a Belo endorser, volunteered to go with them. Other members of the group were business woman Nelly Sy (owner of Pink Box), Belo doctors Grace Purificacion and Nina Cesa, UST pediatrician Dr. Dennis Flores, and De La Salle orthopedic surgeon Dr. Mike Muñoz.

The group was organized by Hayden who has been devoting most of his efforts to charity. "I might not have my medical license but I still have the heart of a doctor to help," said Hayden who was spotted at the UST pediatrics charity ward, giving children money for tickets to go home to spend Christmas with their families.



Hayden Kho Jr. attends to a patient at the evacuation center in Iligan City.

Philippine Airlines was kind enough to support the cause and did not charge them for 600-kg excess baggage.

"Since most of the help was concentrated in Cagayan de Oro, the team together with the Red Cross, decided to go to Iligan City, two hours away from CDO," said a Belo Essentials staffer.

[PHOTO - Hayden Kho Jr. attends to a patient at the evacuation center in

Iligan City. Below: Derek Ramsay gets a hug from a Sendong victim.]

Upon arriving at Echavez Elementary School in CDO, the group was met by the 300 families evacuated there. It turned out that because of their inaccessibility the refugees had not eaten for three days. Most of the families were from Lambaguhon. They lost their homes in the flash floods caused by the illegal logging in the area.

The medical group, headed by Hayden, immediately went to work on



Derek Ramsay gets a hug from a Sendong victim.

evacuees with big open wounds, giving tetanus shots, curing coughs and colds, and administering to pregnant women and their children.

The lay group headed by Cristalle handed out food items, blankets, soaps, sleeping mats, sardines, and cooking and eating utensils. Hundreds of new clothe from Maldita were distributed.

Of course, the Derek Ramsay magic worked wonders. The evacuees forgot their hunger, homelessness and other problems as Derek entertained them.

"Derek was extremely accommodating even as people pinched him, making gigil and dragged him here and there for the unending picture-taking," added the Belo staffer. "He never showed the pain he was feeling as people kept touching and tugging at his arm where the fresh surgical wound from his recent surgery was throbbing." Hayden and Cristalle led the games that filled the evacuation center with laughter. The group stayed for two days; they plan to go back with more medical help, food and supplies.

While Cristalle and Hayden were civil towards each other, there was still an obvious coolness between them, observed an eyewitness. In spite of this, it's heart-warming to see how two people who could put personal issues aside to help those in need. ■

Regine Velasquez marks return to concert scene with Valentine show

Fans have known all along that singer and new mom Regine Velasquez wouldn't be out of commission for a long time. And even Velasquez is fired up with nervous excitement over her return to the concert scene, via a Valentine show with husband Ogie Alcasid on Feb. 14.

"Aminado ang songbird na kabado siya sa muling pagbabalik niya sa entablado. Matapos ang kanyang pagbubuntis, ito na raw ang opisyal niyang pagbabalik sa showbiz," Nelson Canlas reported on "24 Oras," Jan. 18.

"Na-miss kong sobrang kumanta, mag-perform coz' I wanted to perform with him kasi minsan kasi hindi din kami nagkikita, eh, that's why I'm also excited kasi alam ko sa show na ito, I'm gonna be with him all the time. Kaka-miss din 'yung gano'n, eh, na...kasi lately hindi naman kami nagko-concert. Ako, hindi ako nagso-show," Velasquez said in a video clip.

Velasquez was sidelined giving birth to Nathaniel James or Baby Nate more than two months ago.

"Bakas ang kasiyahan sa mukha ni Regine sa pagiging mommy. Mas priority niya nga raw ang pagbe-breastfeed kay Baby Nate kaysa sa tutukan ang pagpapapayat. Hands on nga daw siya sa pag-aalaga sa kanilang two month-old baby. Kita nga sa daily tweets ng Songbird ang daily routine nilang mag-ina, mula sa pagpapaligo kay Baby Nate hanggang sa minsan ay late-night breastfeeding session. Araw-araw daw siyang may natutunan sa pagiging mommy," Canlas reported.

"When I was pregnant people would always tell me na, 'Naku, it will change your life. Iba talaga 'yung buhay'. I have no idea. Parang doon sa ine-expect ko mas sobra pa doon. But it's wonderful. Iba, iba talaga," she mused aloud.

The "24 Oras" report said that

Velasquez and Alcasid's son will be baptized on Sunday.

"Sampung pares ng ninong at



ninang ang dadalo na pawang malalapit na kaibigan nila sa loob at labas ng showbiz. Kabilang sa mga ninong sina GMA President and CEO Gilberto Duavit, Jr., Cong. Manny Pacquiao, senator Ramon 'Bong' Revilla, Jr., fashion mogul Bench Chan at Dingdong Dantes. Kabilang naman sa mga ninang sina Kris Aquino at Judy Ann Santos."

The singer explained their choice of godparents for their son.

"'Yung mga kinuha namin, although they're in the business, kasi ito naman 'yung world namin, ito naman ang mundo namin...pero 'yung pinili namin, 'yung 'bang in case

something would happen to the both of us, kampaante kami na may mag-aalaga [kay Baby Nate]...may second

set of parents," Velasquez said.

"We got family members and close friends. But we also got people we admire and we look up to," Alcasid added.

Although she can very well buckle down to work, Velasquez feels she can only entertain offers to host and to sing.

"Mukhang tatanggi muna siya sa paggawa ng teleserye para magkaroon siya ng sapat na oras sa lumalaki nilang baby," Canlas reported. ■

Lovi plays it cool, not seeing Ronald



Lovi Poe

Lovi Incommunicado: We spoke on a Friday, the eve of her boyfriend, former Ilocos Sur Congressman Ronald Singson's arrival after 18 months of detention in a Hong Kong jail.

Lovi Poe said she was aware of the date after having corrected us. We had mistaken he was scheduled to arrive that same afternoon that we were sipping coffee in a Cebu restaurant, awaiting her cue to perform at a GMA Network Sinulog-inspired free show at the Ayala Terraces mall in the city.

While admitting that she was aware of the latest news concerning his newly regained freedom mainly through what she gets in the news, the singer-actress said she had no plans of meeting him at the airport. She added that they have not communicated in a long time but maintained an open stance. Yes, she said, she will remain as his friend but refused to elaborate.

Singson was jailed for drug possession in Hong Kong in 2010. His family has said he will focus on family businesses and quit politics altogether upon his return. ■

Marvin Agustin opts to spend 33rd birthday doing charity work



Marvin Agustin shares his blessings with the less fortunate, but in ways that go beyond merely giving people things

Actor and businessman Marvin Agustin "pays it forward" on his 33rd birthday on Jan. 29 by bringing some 40 kids with harelip to Enchanted Kingdom for a day of fun.

"I've been so blessed. This time,

gusto ko, ako naman ang magregalo," he said in a recent interview.

Some of the kids that will join the excursion on Jan. 28 are ones whose harelip Marvin has had treated last year via Operation Smile. He also plans to bring along his six-year-old twins, Santiago and Sebastian, to further impress on them that blessings are meant to be shared with others.

Aside from doing charity work on his birthday, Marvin marks his 15th year in show business by launching "Life-Changing Gifts: Marvin at 15." According to a release, the project is about Marvin sharing his blessings with the less fortunate, but in ways that go beyond merely giving people things.

That is, Marvin will identify 15 recipients and share with them gifts that reflect his interests and things he dreamed of doing but wasn't able to accomplish, such as enrolling in

culinary school, finishing formal schooling, taking up singing and acting lessons, and the like.

Speaking of singing lessons, Marvin was teased by the media about talk that he has plans of going into recording. Apparently, his new manager, Annabelle Regalado-Borja, who was a top exec of Star Records for the longest time, encourages him to do so.

"Hindi, para lang sa mga out-of-town gigs kaya gusto ko magimprove sa pagkanta. Symepre minsan kelangan natin kumanta sa mga shows so nakakahiya naman kung di ka prepared," Marvin said.

Although he can't disclose specifics at this stage, Marvin has lots of plans in 2012. As concert promoter, he targets for his Futuretainment Inc. to bring their first international artist to Manila by April. Rumor has it that it could be Madonna or U2 but Marvin has his lips sealed on the matter. Note

that last year, Futuretainment Inc produced a barrage of successful concerts including those by top acts Miley Cyrus, Black Eyed Peas, and Bruno Mars.

As restaurateur, Marvin will have had 20 plus restaurants (owned and franchised) by years end with two abroad (Shanghai and Los Angeles). Some of his existing restaurants are Sumo Sam, Robotosan Japanese Grill and Shabu-Shabu, John and Yoko, Mr. Korosawa, Johny Chow, Komrad, Oyster Boy and Marciano's.

Marvin is currently shooting a movie tentatively titled "Moron 5 & The Crying Lady" with co-stars John Lapus, Kean Cipriano, Mark Escudero, Luis Manzano and Billy Crawford. There are also plans for him to have a solo movie soon.

What is the secret of his success? "Maturity and patience, driven by passion," he was quoted as saying. ■

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.19*

Piolo denies rivalry with Jericho



Piolo Pascual (left) maintains he is a good friend with Jericho Rosales (right)

Actor Piolo Pascual has denied reports of a brewing rivalry between him and Jericho Rosales, his co-star in the upcoming ABS-CBN television series "Padre de Pamilya."

In an interview with Push.com.ph, Pascual stressed that they are good friends and are just glad to have another chance of working alongside each other.

The two actors can be seen in "ASAP Rocks" and were also part of the defunct sitcom, "Bora." "Padre de Pamilya" is their first teleserye together.

"We've always wanted to work with each other, not to compete with each other, but to really hang-out and not naman to challenge each other. We're just so excited because we were given the chance to work together," Pascual said.

According to Pascual, comparisons are inevitable in the entertainment industry.

However, he said he finds this practice unnecessary.

He said: "I don't see any point of doing that. Hindi naman na kami bata para magtagisan 'di ba?"

Pascual also said there is basically no basis for comparison since their style of acting are totally different.

"As far as I'm concerned, magkaiba naman kami ng atake. Magkaiba kami ng pinanggalingan at mataas ang respeto ko sa kanya bilang artista dahil alam ko ang pagmamahal niya sa craft niya, alam ko yung passion niya sa acting at di ko matatawaran yun." ■

Gladys Guevarra's father dies in motorcycle accident



Gladys is set to return to Manila today for her father's wake and funeral

The father of TV host-actress Gladys Guevarra passed away Jan. 15 while he was driving a motorcycle in Manila.

According to "24 Oras," the cause of death of Roberto Guevarra is still undetermined although initial

investigations show it could be due to heart attack.

"Sumemplang ang kanyang motor dahil para mabagok ang kanyang ulo," reported "Chika Minute" host Pia Guanio, adding that though he was rushed to the hospital, Roberto was pronounced dead on arrival.

Gladys was in Cebu when her father died. She is set to return to Manila today for the wake and funeral.

"Nasa Cebu ako for sinulog, last night the news was bad. My father died, ang hirap," said she via Twitter. She addressed those who have condoled with her "nababasa ko po ang mga messages ninyo sa akin. bawal lang daw po magpasalamat. Peace po!" ■

KC gets Sharon's thumbs up for sexy mag cover



In Rogue Magazine Feb 2012 Issue KC wears a white one-piece high-cut swimsuit

Netizens have been praising KC Concepcion's "daring" cover photo on Rogue Magazine's January-February issue, and among them is her very own mother, Sharon Cuneta.

Sought for comment on the matter by one of her Twitter followers, the Megastar posted on Jan. 24, "She stole my pose but I think she's beautiful! Hahahaha!"

On Wednesday last week, Sharon addressed KC also on Twitter, saying, "tutti! I'm nervous about rogue! Did u stay your decent self or steal my future daring pose?!"

KC's reply read, "I'm nervous too! Kasi I did the future daring pose. Hahaha don't look na! :)"

In white one-piece swimsuit-like garb and with her recently-cut hair brushed up, the actress-host posed with her back to the camera while looking over her shoulder. Props included were a wooden bust of a man by her feet, and KC's pet ball python named Coco wrapped around her left wrist.

Reactions from netizens have mostly been on the positive side.

"Smokin' HOT!!! I've been waiting sooo long for KC to be the cover girl of #Rogue..MUST HAVE MAG for ds yr :))" user @aelohomora17 tweeted on Monday.

"Danggg! #RogueJanFeb2012 Ms. @kc_concepcion Way to start Rogue's New Year, talk about Man Slayer-literally! #WomenEmpowerment," @dnd4lyf said.

Director Yam Laranaz tweeted, "love KC's cover! Very very sexy cool :)" while TV personality-model Bianca Gonzales

said that the cover was "nicely done!!"

It also turned out that some netizens have been decoding symbolisms allegedly found on the cover.

User @thysz observed, "KC as Medusa. That severed head looks like Pi... nevermind."

Artist JP Cuison went as far as specifying certain elements as seen in a photo posted on his Facebook account, such as the snake which supposedly meant "a reptilian representation of treachery and deceit"; and the word "roué," which was originally the magazine title but KC's head covered the letter G, which meant "a dissolute man in a fashionable society."

For her part, KC found JP's interpretation "quite interesting."

Renowned photographer Mark Nicdao, who shot KC for Rogue, explained via Twitter on Monday that the cover "is open for interpretation. Up to you what you want to see." However, he said that Cuison's interpretation was "astig."

In other tweets, he shared, "During the shoot I saw genuine happiness and contentment from Kc. she's moved on:-) one of our bravest shoot:-)" and "The photos inside you'll see the new and improved stronger Kc:-) a new year indeed. The article is a Must Read."

In a tweet posted also on Wednesday last week, KC explained what her Rogue issue is about: "Women have a strength they might not always believe they have..." and "is all about trusting in the truth & finding ur strength. :)". ■

More Showbiz Gossip on page 22

Simple Wine Resolutions for 2012



By David White

Early January is the perfect time to reflect on the previous year and make resolutions for the new one. For those of us who take wine seriously -- or at least want to -- it's smart to include wine in our New Year's resolutions. So here are three simple resolutions that'll heighten your wine appreciation in 2012.

1. Learn!

There are countless ways to learn about wine. Books are great, as you can move at your own pace. If you're a budding oenophile, pick up a copy of Kevin Zraly's "Windows on the World Complete Wine Course." If you're already somewhat advanced, make sure you have a copy of "The Oxford Companion to Wine" on your bookshelf. Edited by celebrated British wine writer Jancis Robinson, it's considered the world's most comprehensive wine encyclopedia.

Wine courses are also a great way to learn - and they're typically lots of fun. There are plenty of excellent options across the country, but if possible, look for a

school that's affiliated with the London-based Wine & Spirit Education Trust. For good reason, it's recognized across the world.

2. Be adventurous.

If you like red wines, you're probably drinking lots of Cabernet Sauvignon. If you prefer whites, you're probably drinking Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc. Either way, most of it's probably coming from California. In 2012, resolve to explore the unfamiliar by trying unusual grapes from unusual regions.

If you like Chardonnay, consider Virginia Viognier or South African Chenin Blanc. If you like Sauvignon Blanc, try Torrontes, from Argentina, or Albarino, from Portugal. If you're a red wine drinker, consider ordering Argentinian Malbec or Chilean Carmenere. And don't be afraid to drink Merlot - even if it's from California. It's become cool to bash the grape, but it's often as rich as Cabernet Sauvignon and more approachable when young.

3. Serve wine at the right temperature.

Most people - and even most restaurants - serve red wines too warm and white wines too cold. When red wine is served at "room temperature" - which tends to hover at around 72 degrees - it can taste rough and alcoholic. When white wine comes straight out of the refrigerator, it's refreshing - but can be tasteless. This is unfortunate. If you're spending money on wine, you deserve to enjoy its aromas and flavors.

Fortunately, you don't need a fancy thermometer to serve wine at its optimal temperature. If you're drinking a red wine, pop it in the fridge for 25-

30 minutes. If you're drinking a white wine, pull it out of the fridge about 25-30 minutes before you're going to drink it. Just remember that while it's easy to warm up a wine that's served too cold (just wait longer), it's nearly impossible to chill a wine that's served too warm.

The list of resolutions could easily go on.

If you're interested in seeing the wine-making process and meeting with vintners, it's hard to beat a wine trip -- whether it's a day at two local vineyards or a weekend getaway to wine country. If you're serious about wine appreciation, then you should keep a diary -- it's the best way to keep track of your discoveries and remember which wines you've enjoyed. And everyone should resolve to drink more sparkling wine - it matches any number of dishes, so shouldn't be relegated to celebrations.

The world of wine offers endless possibilities. So regardless of which resolutions you make - and which resolutions you keep - just make sure wine is a part of your life in 2012!

David White, a wine writer, is the founder and editor of Terroirist.com. His columns are housed at Wines.com, the fastest growing wine portal on the Internet.

From Page 4 Pensions

who reaches the age of 80 could receive a minimum of \$675,000. The absurd munificence of the scheme is apparent from just one example: Pierre-Luc Dusseault, who became Canada's youngest ever MP when he was elected as a member of the NDP in Sherbrooke,



Pierre Luc Dusseault, MP
Sherbrooke

will qualify for his pension before his 26th birthday, if he is re-elected.

As Sprott's Mr. Lee put it: "Presently there are three classes of Canadians concerning pensions: First-class Canadians who receive MPs pensions; government-class Canadians, who get public service pensions, with retirement at 50 or 55; and cattle-class Canadians, who collect OAS at 65. Or, as Orwell said: 'All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others'."

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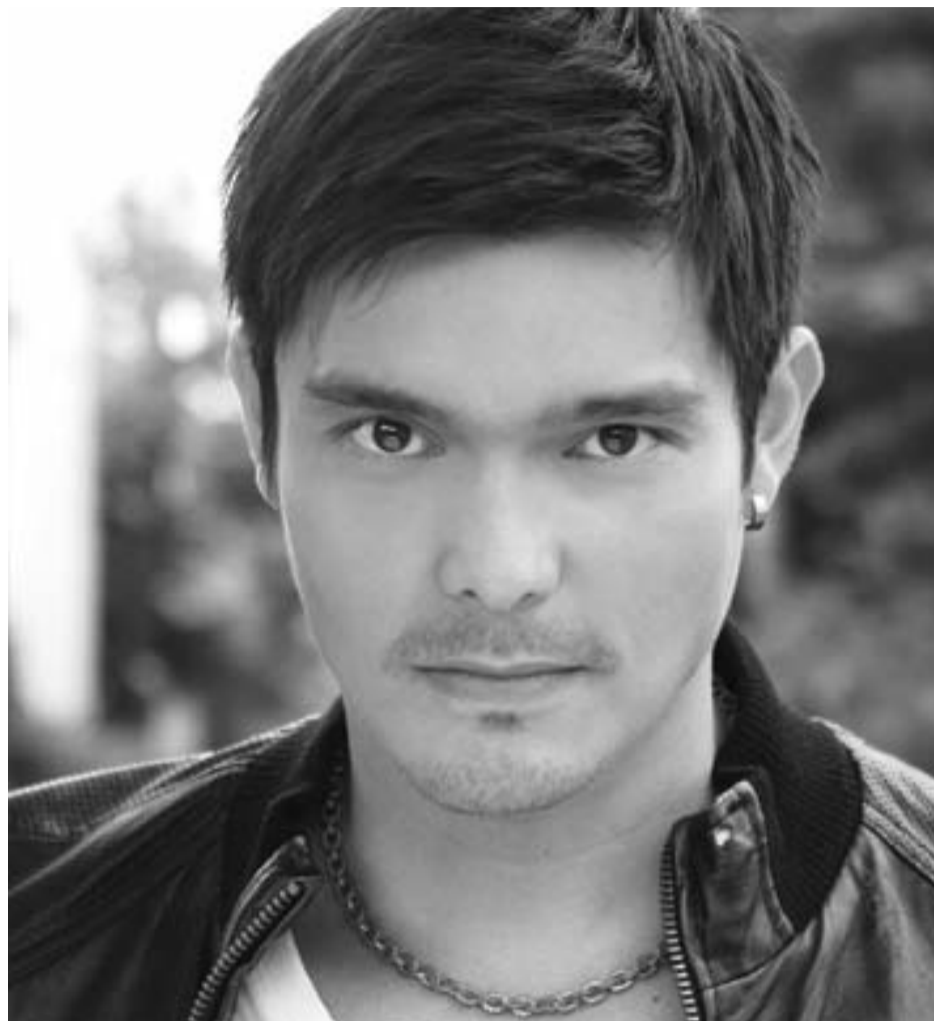
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Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.21***Dingdong sets new targets in 2012****Dingdong Dantes: big plans for 2012**

Broadening Dingdong: At 31, Dingdong Dantes has come to that point in an artist's career when he wants to initiate steps to broaden his range. He speaks of a yearning for challenges, facing them head-on, confident that every challenge hurdled entails a lot of lessons learned.

As we speak at the coffee shop of a hotel in Iloilo City moments before he was to face a big crowd of Dinagyang celebrators Jan. 20, the actor underscored the need for creating more projects that would make a greater impact on the public.

He said he was proud and lucky to have been a part of "Segunda Mano," where his participation was not limited to being an actor but also that of a co-producer. Dingdong says he, too, had a hand in the film's creative growth, a direction that he wants to pursue in forthcoming projects.

Target Filmmaker: Dingdong finished a film workshop under Marilou Diaz Abaya under whom he made a demo reel. The demo eventually led to a directorial assignment at GMA ("Kakabakaba ka ba?").

While Dingdong has momentarily halted his directing career ("I find it so draining more than acting"), he nonetheless thinks he should get back to it in due time. Meanwhile, he has set up his own production company, Agostodos Productions, whose first co-production venture has been "Segunda Mano" for which he won the best actor award in the 37th MMFF.

Agostodos has also put in the can a film awaiting proper screening, "Aswang Chronicles," which Dingdong also topbills. As actor-producer, he wants to produce films that not only have

something new to say but are also capable of making money.

International Scene: Dingdong doesn't hide the fact that like every actor worth his salt, he dreams of making it in the international scene. While he's not exerting extra effort to reach this dream – such as going to casting calls and auditions – he maintains that doing well in one's profession and loving your work in general can spread one's reputation around.

Dingdong has quietly also gone back to school. Armed with several semesters' worth of units in International Studies at the Ateneo de Manila University, he has decided to pick up where he left off by enrolling in a long-distance degree program in business management at West Negros University in Bacolod. He reports to school once a month. Dingdong hopes to finish college in his desire to enroll in a master's degree program later. His interests are in the very masculine lines of defense and flying.

Dancing Days: Meanwhile, while he is still Dingdong Dantes, the idol of millions and the future star (in tandem with Marian Rivera) of GMA's "My Beloved," he continues to do the sing-and-act routine on stage, such as the one he did that same afternoon at Robinsons fountain area in downtown Iloilo. He can sing and host and act on cue, but Dingdong says his days as a dancer are over.

"I leave that to the younger guys," he said, while pointing to Mark Herras, who at 25, himself claims he's over the hill where dancing prime is concerned. ■

Manny ready to 'make history' with Floyd

Manny Pacquiao has turned his game face on and assured boxing fans that his much-awaited fight with Floyd Mayweather, Jr. will happen when the latter agrees to the proposed 50 percent split of shares between them.

"Siya na [lang] ang dapat mag-oo... marami kasi siyang kinakausap, marami siyang mga representatives... Tanggapin niya 'yung 50 percent na share niya at tuloy na 'yung laban,'" the boxer-congressman told "TV Patrol" on Jan. 11.

In monetary terms, Mayweather's share could amount to \$50 to \$60 million, Pacman added.

The ever-flashy Mayweather, who will serve a three-month sentence for domestic violence in June, challenged Pacquiao anew via Twitter on Wednesday to push through with a May 5 fight "and give the world what they want to see."

"Step up Punk," he further dared.

The American boxer also posted an aerial shot of himself seated beside his boxing belt, bearing the caption, "I'm ready to put my belt up. What about you Manny Pacquiao? Let's make history."

Top Rank head honcho Bob Arum, who's currently in the country to discuss fight plans with the Sarangani representative, deemed that the Pacquiao-Mayweather match "could happen very, very easily."

"It could happen either at the end of May, which would give us enough time to build the outdoor arena that the fight so badly needs. Or even better it could go on June 9," he said on "24 Oras."

The said arena in Las Vegas, which is being built to accommodate 50,000 fans, will guarantee a valuable part of the needed returns for the grand fight purse. The venue is expected to be completed by the end of May.

However, Arum sees an "economic problem" could be the "only reason... the fight won't happen."

Although "everybody agrees that the proceeds from the fight will be divided 50-50—50 [percent] to Pacquiao's camp, and 50 to Mayweather's camp," Arum was quoted by GMA News Online to have said, "Mayweather has no promoter and there's no one who can guarantee his purse, so Mayweather is looking for outside

parties who will guarantee his purse."

"Until he finds an angel, there is no fight. It's all posturing," he added.

On a lighter note, the Pacquiao couple celebrated the birthday of Jinkee and her twin Janet a day earlier on Jan. 11, GMA News TV's "News To Go" and "Balitanghali"

**It's game on for Manny Pacquiao**

reported on Jan. 12. An intimate party attended by their closest family and friends, it was held at the Pacquiao mansion in General Santos.

Footage on "Balitanghali" showed the now 33-year-old Jinkee performing a romantic duet with her better half. Her birthday wish?

"Lakas ng katawan tsaka peace sa family, peace of mind," she said.

The Pacquiao couple is set to visit their beach resort in Maasin, Sarangani on Thursday aboard their P25-million yacht.

Although he's got a fight and businesses to attend to, the boxing superstar has not forgotten his "kababayans" in GenSan. According to a report on Bomboradyo, Pacquiao pledged to donate funds for the representatives of Alabel National Science High School (ANSHS) who will attend an international congress in Science City, Kolkata, India next month.

The students will present their study, "Ethnopharmacological Screening of Selected Medicinal Plants in Alabel Sarangani," which was one of the chosen entries out of over 3,000 submissions from various countries, the report added ■

Top 10 Most Expensive MP Pensions



10. Michael Chong



9. Peter Van Loan



8. Rona Ambrose

Welcome to the \$3-million club. The above 10 MPs will each receive an estimated total lifetime pension of more than \$3 million if



7. Rob Anders



6. Denis Coderre



5. Scott Brison

they retire in 2019.

All the estimates come from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation and are based on an MP retiring in 2019 and ceasing to receive their pension at age 80.

10. Michael Chong - \$3,124,903 (2015 = \$2,684,816)

9. Peter Van Loan - \$3,194,114 (2015 = \$2,462,029)



4. James Moore



3. Gerry Byrne

8. Rona Ambrose - \$3,330,876 (2015 = \$2,429,149)

7. Rob Anders - \$3,643,873 (2015 = \$3,034,089)

6. Denis Coderre - \$3,701,989 (2015 = \$3,288,821)

5. Scott Brison - \$3,723,666 (2015 = \$3,113,881)

4. James Moore - \$3,795,386 (2015 = \$2,893,658)

3. Gerry Byrne - \$3,996,498 (2015 = \$3,450,711)

2. Jason Kenney - \$4,318,507 (2015 = \$3,416,779)

1. Stephen Harper - \$5,596,474 (2015 = \$5,456,109)

Prime Minister Stephen Harper would receive an estimated lifetime pension of \$5,456,109 if he were to retire in 2015.

Harper's numbers are based on the PM not buying back into the program for his service as a Reform Party MP between 1993-



2. Jason Kenney



1. Stephen Harper

1997. In order to make a political statement, Harper did not contribute to the pension program during his time as a Reform MP. After returning to Parliament Hill in 2002, Harper could have retroactively contributed to the program for his service from 1993 to 1997. According to the PMO, Harper has not and will not make those contributions. MPs are not obligated to disclose this information.

If Harper were to choose to buy back in for those years, his numbers would change. If he were to buy back in and retire in 2019 he would receive an estimated lifetime pension of \$6,216,858 and \$6,233,568 if he were to retire in 2015.

His numbers also include the special allowance he will receive as Prime Minister.

An earlier version of this story used the numbers based on Harper buying back in for the 1993 to 1997 period. After being contacted by the PMO with the prime minister's pledge not to do so, the numbers were updated. (CP)



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(Ethel Tugna, March 2011 graduate)



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