

Joint celebrations of Filipino Heritage and Philippine Independence Day



June 2, 2025 Flag raising at Pierrefonds-Roxboro Borough. This is the follow up to the motion adopted May 5 declaring every June as Filipino Heritage Month in the Borough resulting from the joint efforts of United Against Hate Canada and the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal to invite as many municipalities as possible to adopt Filipino Heritage Month. (Photo sent by Marvin Rotrand)

Montreal, - By Z.F. Kharroubi)
 It is the 7th anniversary of Filipino Heritage Month as well as the 127th Philippine Independence Day. Filipinos everywhere are busy in

marking these two occasions with jubilant pride and deep gratitude for the increasing popularity among the different levels of government to pass resolutions to declare June as Filipino

Canada's priorities for the G7 summit, June 15-17



The Kananaskis Country entry sign on Highway 40 near the Trans-Canada Highway. GREG COLGAN RMO PHOTO - Story on page 17.



June 12, 2025 - First flag raising ceremony hosted by Cote St. Luc Mayor Mitch Brownstein at 4:30 p.m. in front of City Hall attended by members and leaders of the Filipino-Canadian community led by Chairman Al Abdon of the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal and Marvin Rotrand, Director-General of United Against Hate Canada, resulting from CSL Council resolution adopted last year.

Heritage Month in order to recognize the immense contributions of Filipinos in many fields of human endeavors, in particular, healthcare, arts and sciences, politics, entrepreneurship,

education, and volunteerism.
 The Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal and the United Against Hate

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Joint celebrations

Pablo Rodriguez elected QC Liberal Party leader



Quebec Liberal Party leadership candidate Pablo Rodriguez gives remarks during the Quebec Liberal Party French-language leadership debate in Laval, Que., on Saturday, May 3, 2025. (Christopher Katsarov/The Canadian Press) See Page 17.

Historical perspectives and insights to illuminate the Filipino cultural heritage and identity

In celebrating Filipino Heritage Month and Philippine Independence Day, it is important to remember what makes Filipinos different from other Asian nations and why they are proud of their identity and cultural heritage. Like most immigrants, the primary reason Filipinos go to another country is for economic opportunities and better financial prospects. Many seek higher salaries and more stable employment than what is available in the Philippines, leading them to work as Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). This migration is often driven by the desire to improve their living standards and provide for their families, including sending remittances back home. In fact, these remittances are a major contribution to the Philippine economy.

The cultural identity of Filipinos is a complex blend of maintaining traditional practices while adapting to a new environment including active participation in community organizations, preserving language, and engaging in cultural events and celebrations. However, Filipinos also face challenges such as navigating stereotypes and discrimination, which can impact their sense of belonging and identity.

About 86 to 87 percent of the Philippine population belong to the 19 ethnolinguistic groups which are classified as neither indigenous nor

moro, known simply as Filipinos. These groups are sometimes collectively referred to as "Lowland Christianized groups" to distinguish them from the other ethnolinguistic groups. The most populous of these groups, with populations exceeding a million individuals, are the Ilocano, the Pangasinense, the Kapampangan, the Tagalog, the Ivatan, the Cuyonon, the Bicolano, the Visayans (Cebuanos, Boholano, the Hiligaynon/Ilonggo, and Waray) and many more. These groups converted to Christianity and was part of the Spanish empire, particularly both the native and migrant lowland-coastal groups, and adopted foreign elements of culture throughout the country's history.

Due to the history of the Philippines since the Spanish colonial era, there are also some historical migrant heritage groups within the lowland Filipino populations such as the Chinese Filipinos and Spanish Filipinos, both of whom intermixed with the above lowland Austronesian-speaking ethnic groups, which produced Filipino Mestizos. These groups also comprise and contribute a considerable proportion of the country's population, especially its elite group and were integral to the establishment of the country from the rise of Filipino nationalism by the Ilustrado intelligentsia to the Philippine Revolution. Other peoples of migrant and/or mixed



Rich Heritage and Vibrant Life - Luneta, also known as Rizal Park, stands as a vibrant symbol of Filipino history and culture in the bustling heart of Manila. This iconic urban park, spanning over 58 hectares, is more than just a green space; it is a testament to the Philippines' rich history, a center for civic gatherings, and a haven for relaxation and leisure. (From: nipino.com website)

descent include American Filipinos, Indian Filipinos, Japanese Filipinos, and many more.

Given the diversity of the Philippines, the unifying element of Filipino culture is a complex matter. A sense of national identity emerged out of the long standing struggle for

independence. In contemporary Philippines, many Filipinos are acutely aware of the colonial history of their country. For example, José Rizal, a national hero in the struggle for Philippine independence, is a highly

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Happy Filipino Heritage Month and 127th Philippine Independence !





Michelle Setlakwe
MNA for Mont-Royal-Outremont
Michelle.Setlakwe.MROU@assnat.qc.ca
(514) 341-1151



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



Désirée McGraw
MNA for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce
Desiree.McGraw.NDG@assnat.qc.ca
(514) 489-7581



Brigitte B. Garceau
MNA for Robert-Baldwin
Brigitte.Garceau.ROBA@assnat.qc.ca
(514) 684-9000



Sona Lakhoyan Olivier
MNA for Chomedey
Sona.LakhoyanOlivier.CHOM@assnat.qc.ca
(450) 686-0166



André A. Morin
MNA for l'Acadie
André-A.Morin.ACAD@assnat.qc.ca
(514) 337-4278

Sari-saring balita sa wikang Tagalog

ni Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi

May "Learning Crisis" ang Pilipinas ayon sa UNICEF



Isang eskuelahan sa Pasig City na nagsimula ng klase, Hunyo 16. Litratong galing sa EDCOM 2/Facebook

Hunyo 18, 2025 - Isang opisyal ng UNICEF ay nag-abiso ng lumulubhang "learning crisis" sa Pilipinas na nakita sa mga ulat na maraming estudyante ang lumalagpak sa pagbabasa (reading) at mathematics.

Ayon sa ulat na nalathala noong 2019, si Akihiro Fushimi pinuno ng UNICEF ay nagbigay ng babala na 90% ng mga batang Pilipino sa Grade 5 ay hindi makabasa at 83% naman ay nahihirapan sa basic mathematics.

"Ito ay talagang malubhang problema ng pag-aaral," iginiit ni Fushimi sa press conference niya sa Makati. ("This is a real and widespread learning crisis," Fushimi stressed during a press conference in Makati City.)

Sinabi rin niya na lalong malubha ang problema ng mga bata sa mga lugar ng Bangsang Moro (the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM),

Bukod sa mga problemang galing sa Covid 19 pandemia, nadagdagan pa ng dalawang taong pagkasara ng mga eskuelahan at ang pagkawala ng alternatibong paraan sa pagtulong sa mga bata na makapag-aral, lalo na sa mga lugar na naghihirap sa kabuhayan.

Sa tantiya ng UNICEF, ang Grade 4 na estudyanteng Pilipino ay katumbas lang ng Grade 1 o 2 sa kakayahan sa pagbabasa at pagbibilang (Literacy and Numeracy levels). Ang problemang ito ay higit na malubha sa mga bata na taga Bangsang Moro.

Bukod pa sa problemang galing sa pandemia, sinabi ni Fushimi na ang mga paulit-ulit na pangyayari sa kalikasan (nature) ay pinalubha ng "climate change" at nakadagdag lalo sa pag-antala ng progresong matuto ang mga bata.

"100% ng mga eskuelahan sa bansa ay may peligrong ma-apektuhan ng klima kagaya ng mga bagyo, baha, lindol, at pagsiklab ng bolkan. Ang mga pangyayaring ito ay makadadagdag sa "learning crisis" ng mga bata." ang sabi ni Fushimi.

Upang mapaglabanan ang mga problemang ito, ang gobyerno ay dapat na mamuhunan (invest) sa edukasyon bago magsimula ng kindergarten (early childhood education) at dapat magsimula ng maaga mula sa edad na tatlo o apat na taon para magkaroon ng matibay na pundasyon sa pag-aaral

1.7 milyon ng kabataan ay walang sapat na nutrisyon

Pagkatapos ng pagpula sa sistema ng edukasyon, sinabi ng ibang eksperto na ang nutrisyon ay importante para magtagumpay sa pag-aaral. Isiniwalat ng World Food Program (WFP) noong Martes na may 1.7 milyong kabataan ay hindi wasto ang kanilang nutrisyon na naging dahilan sa kanilang kapurulan sa pag-aaral at ang problemang ito ay kumakalat sa buong bansa.

Sinabi ni Dipayan Bhattacharyya, WFP deputy country director, na kahit may programa ang gobyerno na nagpapakain sa kabataan, ito ay hindi sapat sa pagbaka sa kakulangan ng mga sustansyang kailangan na naging dahilan sa mga problemang kagaya ng "micronutrient deficiencies, obesity and overweight."

Iginiit niya na kapag may kakulangan sa sustansya ang pagkain ng mga kabataan, ito ay sagabal hindi lamang sa kanilang pag-aaral, ganoon din sa kanilang pagkakaroon ng malusog na katawan.

Ang payo niya sa gobyerno ay ang pagsunod sa batas Republic Act 11037, Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act na gabay sa lahat ng kailangang gawin ng Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare at Development and the National Nutrition Council.

Idinagdag ni Bhattacharyya na importante na pag-ukulan ng pansin ng gobyerno ang pagbaka sa kahirapan ng mga tao at kakulangan sa nutrisyon upang magtagumpay ang mga kabataan sa kanilang pag-aaral. #

(Galing sa Philippine Star, 06/18/2025)

78% ng mga Pinoy ang ayon sa "impeachment trial" ni Sara Duterte - resulta ng OCTA survey

Balita ng GMA Integrated News
Inilathala ng ika-8 Hunyo 2025

Ang mga dekanong mga Koleheyo ng Ateneo, Unibersidad ng Lasallian Family, Unibersidad ng Adamson at Unibersidad ng Santo Tomas sa bansa na dumagdag sa mga institusyon na gustong matuloy ang impeachment ng Vice-President na si Sara Duterte. Ang pamunuan ng mga institusyong paaralan ay nagkaisang mag-amuki sa Senado na agad ipagpatuloy ang impeachment trial kay Sara.

Sinabi ng mga dekanong Ateneo: "Kami ay nanawagang mahigpitan sa aming hangad na magkaroon ng tapat at wastong pagsunod sa katungkulan namin bilang mga edukador at taga-hugis ng mga magiging abokado sa kinabukasan. Nanalangin kami na ang Senado ng Pilipinas ay sasagot at tutuparin ang kanilang mga katungkulan magsilbi sa publiko batay sa katotohanan at pagtiwala ng mga tao sa Senado." Ito ang sinabi ng mga dekanong sa kanilang ginawang deklarasyon.

Ang deklarasyon ay pinirmahan ng lahat ng mga dekanong Unibersidad ng

Ateneo de Manila, Unibersidad ng Xavier, Unibersidad ng Ateneo sa Cagayan, Unibersidad ng Ateneo sa Davao,



Unibersidad ng Ateneo sa Zamboanga, at Unibersidad sa Naga na umpisahan agad ang paglitis kay Vice-President Sara Zimmerman Duterte-Carpio at ipagpatuloy ang ika-20 sesyon ng Kongreso kung kailangan. Idinagdag din ang kanilang mahigpit na hiling bilang Jesuit at Filipino-Katolikong Paaralan ng Batas, "kami ay tapat na tumutupad sa aming mga obligasyon sa pagtuturo ng katotohanan, sa aming posisyon sa pananalig sa hustisya at pagpapairal ng batas." #

Nag-utos ang Pangulong Bongbong Marcos sa pagpapalinis ng mga kasilyas at pagbigay ng malinis na tubig sa lahat ng eskuelahan

Hunyo 9, 2025, MANILA – Iginiit ng pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. noong Lunes na mahigpit na kailangang linisin at kumpunihin ang mga kasilyas ng mga eskuelahan at saka pagbibigay ng malinis na tubig, dahil kailangan ito sa kalusugan at pagligtas sa sakit ng lahat ng mga tao.

Pagkatapos makipagpulong sa

bathroom (That's basic to me, because the children's health is being affected. That's why they get sick if the bathrooms they use are not clean)," Marcos continued.

Ayon kay Marcos, 27 milyong estudyante ang babalik sa eskuela sa susunod na linggo.

Ibinalita niya ang mga ginawang



SCHOOL MAINTENANCE. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. inspects repairs at the Barihan Elementary School in Malolos City, Bulacan during the kickoff of Brigada Eskwela 2025 on Monday (June 9, 2025). The President pressed the need for clean bathrooms and stable water supply in public schools to ensure students' health and safety. (RTVM screengrab)

mga journalistang at pagbisita sa mga eskuelahan sa Malolos at San Miguel Bulacan, sinabi ni Marcos na kailangang gawin ang trabaho na bahagi ng Brigada Eskwela bago magpasukan sa susunod na linggo.

"One of the things that I noticed is the bathrooms. Kailangang-kailangan nating linisin at pagandahin ang mga bathroom (We really need to clean and improve the bathrooms)," Marcos told reporters.

"Hindi naman mahirap gawin 'yon, except ang problema sa mga pinuntahan namin eskwela walang tubig. Kaya kailangan natin tignan nang mabuti. Bakit walang tubig eh nagbabayad naman sila para sa kanilang water supply (That's not hard to do, except the problem in the schools we visited is that there's no water. We have to look into it. Why is there no water when they are paying for the water supply?)," he added.

"For me basic 'yan eh kasi pati 'yung health ng mga bata natatamaan eh. Kaya nagkakasakit yan 'pag malinis yung mga pinupuntahan nilang

reparasyon sa mga gusali ng eskuelahan at ang pag-tanggap ng 20,000 na mga bagong guro. Sinabi rin niya na napansin niya na may mga eskuelahan na nagluma dahil ang mga ito ay mga gusaling Marcos type na itinayo para gamitin sa loob lang ng 20-30 taon. Ang mga Marcos-type na gusaling ito ay itinayo pa noong huling taon ng 1960 na standard classroom design sa administrasyon ng dating Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos

May sukat na 7.5 metro at 6 metro, ang mga gusaling ito na ginamitan ng mga magagaang steel frames at concrete hollow block na dingding, konkretong sahig at pintong steel.

"Mabuti nalang at nagagamit pa pero we really need to have to look at the rehabilitation of many of them (It's good they're still being used, but we really need to look at rehabilitating many of them)," the President said. Kahit may mga hamon ang mga problemang ito, pinuri ng Pangulo ang pagsuporta ng mga ahensia ng "Brigada Eskwela. (PNA)



Monthly news

By John Leo Lete

Local Journalism Initiative

National Ethnic Press & Media Council of Canada

Fo Niemi - A Lifelong Crusader for Human Rights and Systemic Justice

In a modest office tucked away in Montreal, the heartbeat of one of Canada's most persistent civil rights organizations continues to beat steadily, powered by a man whose life has been defined by advocacy, justice, and an unshakable belief in equality. That man is Fo Niemi, co-founder and Executive Director of the Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR), a small but mighty organization fighting systemic discrimination for over four decades.

Roots in Compassion

Mr. Niemi's journey into civil rights began in childhood, not in the courtroom or through academic theory, but around the kitchen table. "I come from a family with a strong tradition of humanitarian work," he said. "My mother instilled in us a deep sense of social conscience and civic responsibility."

That moral compass guided Niemi through his studies in social work and political science at McGill University, where he chose to specialize in community organizing. Working with Project Genesis, he supported marginalized groups in housing and crime prevention initiatives, especially for senior citizens and immigrant families.

"These experiences opened my eyes to how poverty, age, and immigration status intersect with systemic inequality," he explained. "It became clear that community work alone wasn't enough. We needed legal tools and policy reform to create lasting change."

The Birth of CRARR

The 1980s were a time of heightened racial tensions and structural exclusion, especially for Montreal's Asian and English-speaking Black communities. Niemi, then a young volunteer, was drawn into grassroots efforts that sought to address the injustices plaguing these groups.

"These communities were dealing with racism in employment, housing, and especially interactions with the police," he recalled. "We realized we needed an organization that could not only advocate but use the Canadian and Quebec charters of rights to hold institutions accountable."

Thus, CRARR was born—built by Niemi and a coalition of community leaders, many of whom have since passed on. The organization's core mission? Tackle racism through legal advocacy, public education, and policy change.

Staying Small, Thinking Big

Despite its size, CRARR has wielded influence far beyond its



Fo Niemi, co-founder and Executive Director of the Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR), has spent over 40 years fighting systemic racism and advocating for justice (Photo: CRARR)

modest budget and staffing. Niemi attributes this to their intentional structure. "We avoid bureaucracy," he said. "We focus on tangible results—outcomes that matter to real people."

Whereas other advocacy groups may emphasize cultural events or social integration, CRARR's approach zeroes in on systemic discrimination. Niemi proudly notes that CRARR was ahead of its time in addressing not just racism, but how it intersects with gender, class, and disability.

Challenges on the Frontlines

While police relations remain a key issue, especially within Montreal's Black communities, Niemi points to employment discrimination and labor relations as the most frustrating battlegrounds in recent years.

"Unions have become a major obstacle to racial equality," he stated bluntly. "Many union executives remain overwhelmingly white, and they often fail to address racism within the workplace."

described numerous cases where immigrant women of color, such as orderlies, caregivers, and manufacturing workers, found themselves abandoned by their unions. The existing labor tribunal system, he added, only worsens the situation.

"There's not a single person of color on the administrative labor tribunal," he said. "If you're unionized and face racial discrimination, your only recourse is through your union. If the union fails you, you're stuck. It's a systemic dead-end."

The Filipino Community and the Health Care Crisis

Niemi highlighted the particular struggles of Montreal's Filipino community, many of whom work in the healthcare sector, in a heavily unionized environment. Despite their vital contributions, these workers often face racial and gender discrimination without meaningful support.

"We've seen case after case where Filipino nurses and orderlies report harassment and racism, only to be ignored or dismissed by their unions," he said. "It's disheartening—and unjust."

The Shadow of Bill 96 (Law 14)

Niemi also criticized Quebec's controversial language legislation, formerly Bill 96 and now Law 14, for deepening educational and economic inequities. "Education is the key to opportunity," he said. "Yet newcomers, especially English-

speaking immigrants, are being set up to fail under this law."

He warned that many students are struggling to meet the law's French-language requirements in CEGEP and beyond, which creates systemic exclusion from academic and professional advancement.

A Legacy of Relentless Advocacy

As CRARR enters its fifth decade, Niemi remains resolute. "This work is hard. It can be isolating. But we've seen the lives it changes and the barriers we've broken," he said. "Justice doesn't come easily. But with persistence and solidarity, it comes." Fo Niemi is not just a civil rights advocate—he's a living testament to the power of grassroots activism, legal advocacy, and moral clarity. And in a world still reckoning with the scars of systemic injustice, his voice remains as vital as ever. #

Humiliated and Ignored: Chinese Woman Speaks Out After Racial Profiling Incident at Montreal McDonald's Restaurant

A Chinese woman who was expelled from a McDonald's restaurant in Montreal by police officers is speaking out against the Québec Human Rights Commission's decision to dismiss her complaint, which she believes was a clear case of racial profiling and social discrimination.

The incident, which took place in March 2023 at the McDonald's on Saint-Jacques Street West, has left lasting emotional scars on Ms. Nay Ir, a woman in her fifties and mother of two, including an autistic son. She recalls being humiliated and devastated after two police officers—one male and one female—escorted her out of the restaurant without giving her the opportunity to properly explain herself or present identification.

Earlier that morning, Ms. Ir had purchased breakfast from the same McDonald's while taking her son to school. She returned shortly after to use the washroom while her autistic son waited in the parked car outside. Upon exiting the washroom, she was told by police that someone had reported her for "making money" inside the restaurant—a term often used to imply begging.

"I was shocked," Ms. Ir said in an emotional interview. "I didn't ask anyone for money. I'm just a mother, and I bought food there earlier that same morning. Why didn't they ask me



Ms. Nay filed a complaint for racial profiling and discrimination but the Human Rights Commission dismissed her case (Photo: CRARR)

who I am, or check the facts first?"

When she requested to speak inside the restaurant, the police insisted she step outside. Once outside, she was barred from reentering and escorted away in view of onlookers. Ms. Ir describes the moment as "humiliating, dehumanizing, and deeply racist." To make matters worse, Ms. Ir says the officers ignored her repeated attempts to show proof of her purchase and never asked for her ID. "If I had done something wrong, they could have asked for my license or asked where I live. But they just assumed I was a beggar because of how I look."

The trauma from the event, she says, has severely impacted her mental health. "I cried for days. For two

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FILIPINO FAMILY SERVICE OF MONTREAL
SERVICE AUX FAMILLES PHILIPPINES DE MONTREAL

Happy 127 years of Philippine Independence
and Filipino Heritage Month June 2025 to all.

Ramon Vicente, President



ONTARIO Filipino-Canadian Community News

Tony A. San Juan, OCT

Filipino Centre Toronto to honor eight Filipino-Canadian seniors in Ontario

Eight outstanding Filipino-Canadian seniors in Ontario will be honored by the Filipino Centre Toronto (FCT), a notable community hub in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario. The recognition event, a bi-annual initiative, is being held on June 21, 2025 (Saturday) at 5:00 PM at the FCT Social Hall, 4395 Sheppard Avenue East, Scarborough, Toronto. Initiated in 2019 by the FCT, the awards project is to celebrate and pay tribute to deserving retired and still active members of the Filipino-Canadian community.

Deservedly, the recipients are Filipino-Canadian seniors who have made outstanding service and valuable contributions to the life and well-being of the community by helping build a better community through their personal and professional endeavours. These seniors serve or have served as role models and inspirations to students, youth and young adults and their fellow senior citizens.

Invited to attend the ceremony are Minister & MP Rechie Valdez, MP Salma Zahid, MP Shaun Chen, Minister & MPP Raymond Cho, Minister & MPP Vijay Thanigasalam and MPP Doly Begum. Dr. Eileen de Villa, Retired City of Toronto Medical Officer of Health, is the event's guest of honour and speaker.

The awardees have been selected by the FCT Outstanding Filipino Canadian Seniors Awards Committee (OFCSA) based on established



selection criteria. The Selection Committee is composed of Carol Banez, Agnes Miranda, Mogi Mogado, Steve Pagao, Nitz Rejdik, Mary Ann San Juan, (Vice-chairman); Tony San Juan (Chairman), Garry Tanuan, and Antonio Villarin.

The Filipino Centre Toronto, formed in 1999, is a registered not-for-profit and volunteer-run organization in the province. Its mission is to organize and offer a sustainable vehicle to provide reasonable opportunities and valuable activities for students, youth, adults and seniors to engage in the well-being, social development, community building, heritage and cultural understanding. Invited dignitaries, politicians, special guests, honourees' family and friends, the media, and FCT officers, directors, staff and volunteers are expected to attend.

PIDC hosts Farewell party for Philippine Consul General

The Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC), a prominent umbrella organization of Filipino-Canadian community associations in Ontario, hosted a farewell party for the

departing Philippine Consul General in Toronto, Honourable Angelica C. Escalona. The send-off gathering was

held on May 31, 2025, at Islas Filipino BBQ & Bar, Wilson Avenue, North York, Toronto, Ontario.

After her two-year stint in the Philippine diplomatic post in Toronto,



PIDC Despedida for Philippine Consul General Angelica C. Escalona (in blue dress, seated 4th from the right) on May 31, 2025.

Ontario, Canada, from 2023 to 2025, Consul General A. Escalona is said to be "reporting back to the Manila home office

for another diplomatic assignment" somewhere in the world.

PIDC head honcho, Tom Tan, welcomed the guests and thanked the sponsors and those who organized and coordinated the afternoon's "despedida salosalosalo." Immediate Past PIDC President Agnes Miranda characterized and praised the Filipino lady diplomat for being a charming, dedicated, and exemplary diplomatic officer, "amongst many Filipino representatives in Toronto over the years." Escalona expressed her "pagpupugay, paghanga at pasasalamat" to the many Filipinos in Toronto and to the PIDC event organizers for the "Au revoir" tribute to

her.

In recognition of the great service to the Filipino community in Toronto and appreciation for the wonderful relationship that ConGen Escalona has established among her kababayans in Canada, she was given a going-away gift by PIDC which is a framed portrait of her likeness painted by a Manila-based artist. Moreover, business executive Grant Kerwacki, a good friend of Tom Tan and the PIDC family, presented an indigenous-crafted huge pair of beaver-skinned gloves to Escalona "for her to remember her stay and service in the North."

Filipino-Canadian Teachers Hold an Education Conference

Under the auspices of the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), Canada's largest Catholic school board, Filipino-Canadian teachers, parents, students, education leaders and specialists held their "Proudly Pinoy Education Conference" on May 27, 2025, at Brebeuf College School, North York, Ontario. The event was also in celebration of "Filipino Heritage Month" and the "Jubilee 2025 Pilgrims of Hope."

Among the participants are students, parents, representatives and members of the Fil-Can Catholic community, the Filipino Catholic Educators Network (FCEN), the Philippine Teachers Association of Canada (PTAC), the Filipino Canadian Parents Association in Catholic

presented a \$5,000 bursary award by the Angel Foundation of Learning, the TCDSB Filipino Advisory Committee, and the Proudly Pinoy Bursary Committee. The awardees will pursue their undergraduate studies in a teacher education program.

Moses Velasco, Director of Curriculum and Assessment with the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF), was the keynote speaker. After the musical performances of the students of St. Joseph Morrow's Park Catholic High School, St. Robert Catholic School, and the Brebeuf College Band, the conferees met in breakout sessions. Composed of three groups, the participants were assigned to Parents and Community, Educators, and Students.



Fil-Can educators at the TCDSB Proudly Pinoy Education Confab, May 27, 2025.

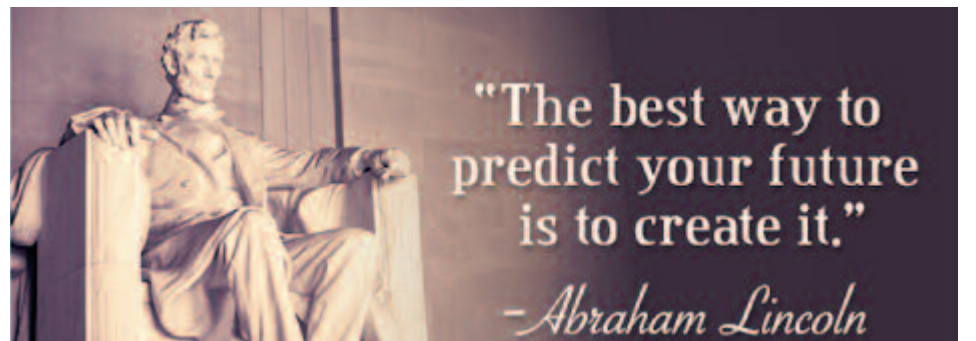
Education (FCPACE), the Catholic School Parent Council and other community stakeholders.

The event involved special greetings and messages from the Philippine Ambassador to Canada, Her Excellency Andreilita Austria, TCDSB Trustee Garry Tanuan, Philippine Consul Rodney J. Samague, and TCDSB Staff Superintendents Roy Fernandes and Ryan Peterson. Jodelyn Huang, TCDSB Community Relations Officer, ably chaired and coordinated the late afternoon proceedings.

During the program, two Filipino senior high school students were each

The conference groups discussed: 1) barriers affecting Filipino-Canadian participation, engagement, and achievement in education, and 2) critical issues and the challenges & culture of what it means to be a Filipino. After each session, representatives of each group presented the minutes of their discussions to enable the participants as well as the community to take action and follow through.

The well-attended gathering was a highly significant and productive conference on Catholic education-centred engagement. #



From Page 5 Humiliated and ignored years, I couldn't go out, couldn't talk to people. I lost my confidence. I became depressed and afraid—afraid of the public, afraid of police, afraid of everything."

The Québec Human Rights Commission has since dismissed her complaint, stating the incident did not amount to discrimination—an outcome Ms. Ir calls "devastating and unjust." She believes her appearance, race, and clothing on that day—blue jacket, red hat, and a backpack—led to her being unfairly targeted, while a white man standing inside the restaurant at the same time was not questioned or removed.

Adding further concern, Ms. Ir's legal advocate revealed that the original 911 call from the McDonald's manager had described a white

woman. Yet, when police arrived, they approached and expelled Ms. Ir, an Asian woman, without verifying details or confirming identities.

"This was not just a mistake," said Ms. Ir. "It was racial profiling. I'm speaking out because if they do this to another person who can't handle it, they might take their own life. I want to make sure this doesn't happen to anyone else."

Ms. Ir now urges other members of the Asian community—and all marginalized groups—to speak up against racism, even when institutions fail them.

"We came to this country for justice, peace, and fairness—not to be treated as second-class citizens. We have to stand up. This is not just about me. This is about human dignity." #

Ensemble Montreal Hosts First Members' Congress, Unveils New Vision for the City

By Leo Lete, Local Journalism Initiative

Montreal, June 1, 2025 — The Passerelle-Perspective Room at the Montreal Science Centre buzzed with energy Sunday afternoon as Ensemble Montréal, led by mayoral candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada, held its inaugural Members' Congress—a pivotal event aimed at galvanizing support, refining policy priorities, and unveiling a refreshed brand image for the party ahead of the municipal election campaign.

Over 300 party members, community activists, and policy experts gathered to discuss the future of Montreal, focusing on urgent urban issues ranging from economic vitality and artificial intelligence to homelessness and public safety.

"This Congress is not just a meeting—it's a movement," said Ferrada during her opening remarks. "Montrealers deserve a city that is dynamic, clean, safe, inclusive, and ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow. That's what Ensemble Montréal stands for."

Key Discussions and Policy Panels

The afternoon's program was

anchored by two rounds of expert panels.

The first, running from 2:45 to 3:40 p.m., delved into the economic resilience of Montreal's neighborhoods and emerging technologies, particularly the role of artificial intelligence in urban development. Party officials emphasized the need to support local businesses, close digital divides, and prepare the workforce for AI integration.

At 3:45 p.m., Ensemble Montréal unveiled its new brand identity, featuring a modernized logo and streamlined visual presentation designed to reflect "clarity, energy, and unity."

The second round of panels addressed pressing community issues:

- **Cleanliness:** Simon Paré-Poupard, author of *Garbage! Journal of a Drainer*, drew on two decades as a sanitation worker to highlight neglected aspects of waste management and urban maintenance.

- **Public Safety:** Pierreson Vaval, founder of Équipe RDP and co-founder of the POZÉ coalition, spoke passionately about community-based violence prevention and building



Mayoral candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada addresses over 300 attendees at Ensemble Montréal's inaugural Members' Congress, held June 1 at the Montreal Science Centre. The event marked the launch of the party's renewed vision and branding ahead of the upcoming municipal election. (Photo from Radio-Canada Marie-Josée Paquette-Comeau)

trust between residents and institutions.

- **Affordable Housing:** Mario Polèse, professor emeritus at the National Institute of Scientific Research, tackled the growing housing crisis, calling for better zoning policies and increased social housing.

- **Homelessness:** Annie Archambault, community worker and digital creator known as @surleborddelaligne, shared firsthand stories of individuals living on the streets, urging systemic, compassionate

Momentum Ahead of the Election

While Sunday's Congress was closed to the general public, its themes reflected Ensemble Montréal's intent to position itself as a bold, solutions-focused alternative in the run-up to the next municipal election.

The choice of venue—the iconic Montreal Science Centre—seemed deliberate. "It represents innovation, openness, and the city's forward-looking spirit," said one organizer.

As the event concluded at 5:00 p.m., Ferrada spoke informally with attendees, reinforcing her message of inclusivity and participatory politics. "This is just the beginning," she said. "Together, we can reimagine Montreal."

About Ensemble Montréal

Founded to unite diverse

voices under a common municipal vision, Ensemble Montréal has grown into one of the city's leading political forces. With Soraya Martinez Ferrada at the helm, the party is preparing a progressive platform focused on livability, equity, and resilience in an evolving urban landscape.



Ensemble Montreal's new logo



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From Page 1 Joint celebrations

Canada work closely together to achieve common objectives of inviting as many municipalities as possible to declare June as Filipino Heritage Month and to host the flag raising ceremony every June 12th which is the Philippine Independence Day. The most recent municipalities to recognize June as the

cited the work of the late Paulina Corpuz of Toronto who originally conceived the idea in 2016. It took almost two years to have it realized through the support of elected political leaders. On October 30, 2018, the Canadian Parliament unanimously approved Bill M-155 sponsored by a Liberal MP, Salma Zahid of Scarborough Center. Starting



A Gilmore College International alumni (1992) Florence Delgado (2nd from left) recognizes her former teacher, Zenaida Kharroubi who established her own private school in 1989 at Girouard Avenue, requested to have a souvenir photo with MP Anthony Housefather and Director-General Marvin Rotrand of United Against Hate Canada. Photo taken at the flag raising ceremony at front lawn of CSL City Hall, June 12, 2025.

Filipino Heritage Month are Roxborro-Pierrefonds Borough and the City of Cote St. Luc.

The history of Filipino Heritage month is available on Wikipedia which

in 2018, Toronto celebrated Filipino Heritage Month, becoming Canada's first municipality to mark June as Filipino Heritage month in perpetuity.

En l'honneur du Mois du patrimoine philippin et de la Journée de l'indépendance des Philippines,
la ville de Côte Saint-Luc était fière d'organiser une cérémonie de levée du drapeau des Philippines le 12 juin devant notre hôtel de ville.

Des photos de l'événement sont disponibles sur CoteSaintLuc.org

In honour of Filipino Heritage Month and Philippine Independence Day,
the City of Côte Saint-Luc was proud to hold a Philippine flag raising ceremony on June 12 in front of our City Hall.

View photos of the event at CoteSaintLuc.org



Backrow (L to R) Cote St. Luc Mayor Mitchel Brownstein, Marvin Rotrand, Mme Elisabeth Prass, MNA for D'Arcy-McGee Riding; MP Anthony Housefather of Mount Royal, and Valent Lloyd Huges, FHSM member. Front row: L to R: Elma Bulatao, FHSM member, Fely R. Carino, N.A. Filipino Star Social Tidbits columnist, Jeannette Perrignon, FHSM Secretary; an unidentified lady, Amy Manon-og and Dolores Blandres, FHSM members and Vicky Laya.

Alberta was the first Canadian province to do so. Montreal also named June as Filipino Heritage Month, by the local Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce Council in February 2018, introduced by Councilor Marvin Rotrand and seconded by Councilor Lionel Perez. which led to the formation of the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM) in March 2018 under the chairmanship of Al Abdon who still continues to be the head of the organization, assisted by a group of committed Montrealers in performing various tasks required.

It is interesting to take note of the fact that over the past several years, since the 1960's, more Filipino immigrants work and live in the Cote des Neiges district which has become like a little Philippine village because of its proximity to hospitals and clinics, and where Filipino-owned grocery stores and restaurants are located. The largest community is found in the Greater Toronto Area with a population of 272,470. Large numbers also live in the metropolitan areas of Vancouver (141,230), Calgary (83,815), Winnipeg (81,140), Edmonton (77,085) and Montreal (39,020) which appears to have one of the lowest populations of Filipino Canadians in urban centers. There are also Filipinos who live in other remote areas of the country like the Yukon and the Yellow Knife Territory.

During the 2021 census of population, 757,410 people reported that they were born in the Philippines and had immigrated to Canada, making

the Philippines the third largest source country for immigration to Canada, following India (1.2 million) and China (830,980).

The Independence Day parade is the biggest feature of Montreal's celebration of Philippine Independence Day that culminates in a big picnic and entertainment at the MacKenzie King Park on Cote St. Catherine where the bust of Dr. Jose Rizal is also located and a special place designated as Place Jose Rizal. This year, it was held on June 15th, sponsored by the Council of Canadian Filipino Associations of Quebec (founded by James de la Paz). This parade was composed of different floats of organizations. Many tents were set up to accommodate food kiosks and community groups to promote their services and products. They brought all kinds of Pinoy dishes and everyone was welcomed to share them. A whole day's programme of activities was hosted by two emcees, namely, Ed Vasquez and Fely Rosales Cariño who have been doing this job for many years.

FAMAS, headed by Nida Quirapas, will also hold a popular town festival "Pista sa Nasyon" at MacKenzie King Park on July 20th. It is the oldest association that celebrated its 62nd anniversary by holding a gala event on June 14th at the Olympia Restaurant.

Wishing all Montrealers a great summer and Mabuhay (Long Live) to all Salamat (Thank you) Canada for welcoming us. #

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From Page 2 Filipino identity

revered and well-known figure whom they look up to as a virtuous person.

The long history of contact with Spain and the United States continues to have a significant impact on the Filipino identity. One example is the influence of American standards of beauty, which are often measured in the Philippines by the possession of Western physical traits – such as fair skin and curly hair. Another example is the prominence of Christian ideology since the introduction of Christianity by the Spanish missionaries. Indeed, when compared to other countries on the Asian continent, the Philippines has one of the highest Christian populations. Statistics indicate that the Philippines has 80% Roman Catholics and 20% of other religious denominations.

Social hierarchy in the Philippines is determined according to age and social status. Nearly all Filipinos are taught from an early age about the importance of the underpinning social hierarchy. Gestures, terms of address and communication styles vary depending on who one interacts with and their relative positions in the social hierarchy. For example, it is expected that, if you are referring to someone who is older than you but within the same generation, you use the terms kuya for males and ate for females (for example, Ate Cora or Kuya Jess). Failing to do so is considered highly disrespectful and a lack of acknowledgment of the

established hierarchy.

Kapwa (fellowship or togetherness) is a core value that explains Filipinos’ interpersonal behaviour. The term generally refers to a shared identity whereby people bond together despite differences in wealth or social status. Kapwa is related to the collectivistic nature of Filipino society. It is believed that what is good for one person will be good for the collective and ought to be shared with fellow people. Being branded as not having any kapwa is an insult as it implies that the person does not belong to a community.

The concept of ‘hiya’ is also one of the underpinning factors influencing how Filipinos behave and interact with others. While hiya translates roughly into English as ‘shame’ or ‘embarrassment’, on a deeper level it refers to one’s sense of self, propriety and respect. Filipinos may be more motivated to succeed by a fear of shame rather than fear of failing the task at hand. To avoid experiencing shame, they may try to give ‘face’ to those around them through complimenting them and avoiding direct criticism. Individuals will often try to be generous and hospitable to avoid hiya and to maintain kapwa.

Filipinos are usually very warm and friendly people who enjoy conversing with those around them. It is common to find strangers engaging in conversation or sharing stories to family, friends or foreigners about their hometown, family or country. Filipinos



Dancing for a Divine Yes: The Obando Fertility Festival - A joyful ritual where faith, dance, and longing come together in a centuries-old plea for life and love. (Source: Discover Philippines)

are often expressive and sentimental whilst maintaining a light-hearted demeanor. Filipinos are often willing to share stories of their past that may be considered personal.

Alongside their warming and light-hearted demeanor, the general approach to life is of acceptance. ‘Bahala na’ (come what may) captures the strong belief among many Filipinos that whatever may happen is a part of God’s will. Any individual or group success is often attributed to fate or God rather than efforts. This indicates a fatalistic attitude throughout society whereby Filipinos are generally accepting of theirs and others circumstances. However, this does not mean Filipinos are passive. Rather, they are hardworking and will often do their best to help themselves and their

family.

Festivals are an integral part of Filipino culture, serving as celebrations of history, religion, and community. From the lively Sinulog Festival to the colorful Ati-Atihan Festival, each event is a testament to the Filipino spirit.

In an era where globalization threatens to homogenize distinct cultural identities, the challenge of preserving the rich tapestry of Filipino cultural heritage becomes paramount. Thus, it becomes imperative to have a collective commitment to the celebration and preservation of Filipino cultural heritage, underscoring its vital role in fostering identity and community in an increasingly interconnected world. (With files from Wikipedia, and other academic studies or reports)

HAPPY FILIPINO HERITAGE MONTH!

We celebrate the invaluable contributions of the Filipino community to our city and our shared heritage.

Nous célébrons les contributions inestimables de la communauté philippine à notre ville et à notre patrimoine commun.




Stephanie Valenzuela
Conseillère de la Ville
City Councillor
District Darlington
stephanie.valenzuela@montreal.ca
(438) 354-8710



Sonny Moroz
Conseiller de la Ville
City Councillor
District Snowdon
sonny.moroz@montreal.ca
(438) 349-7464




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Warm wishes to all those celebrating the 127th Philippine Independence Day and Filipino Heritage Month. This month is a powerful tribute to the rich history, vibrant culture, and enduring contributions of the Filipino community. Your continued efforts to honour and share your heritage strengthen the fabric of our society and inspire pride across generations.

MABUHAY!



Frank Baylis
Executive Chairman of the Board
Baylis Medical Technologies



As we celebrate Filipino Heritage Month and the 127th Anniversary of Philippine Independence, I extend my warmest wishes to the vibrant and inspiring Filipino community. Your contributions and culture continue to enrich our riding and all of Canada.

Mabuhay!


À l'occasion du Mois du patrimoine philippin et du 127^e anniversaire de l'indépendance des Philippines, je tiens à offrir mes vœux les plus chaleureux à la communauté philippine, dynamique et inspirante. Votre culture et vos contributions enrichissent notre circonscription et tout le Canada.

Anthony Housefather, député – Mont-Royal



ANTHONY
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Member of Parliament - Mount Royal
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PAB Batch 12 Graduation, July 3, 2017, first graduation to take place at the social hall of Gilmore College International. Graduates pose with their teachers and guests. Mr. Sonny Moroz (center) represented MP Anthony Housefather at this event

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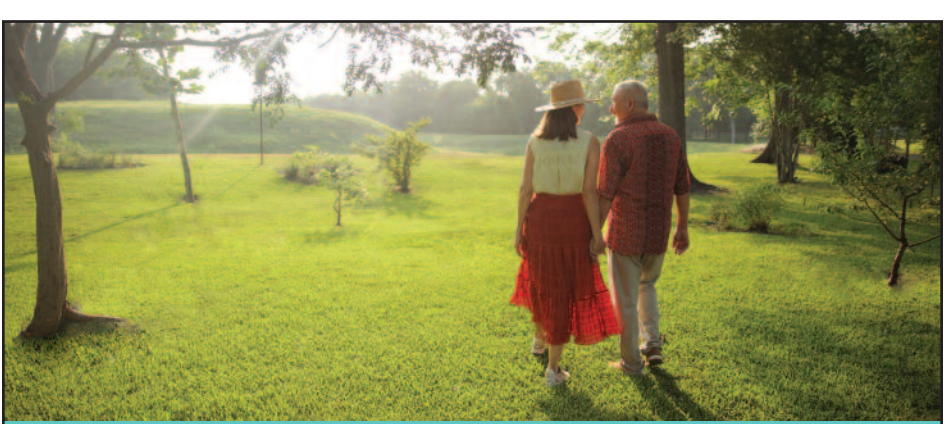
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Delicious recipes for summer days



Greek chicken w Lemon Rice

Ingredients

Chicken

1 tbsp paprika
1 tbsp garlic powder
2 tsp dried oregano
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
¼ tsp salt
1/4 tsp black pepper
1.5 lb chicken breasts skinless and boneless, diced
2 tbsp olive oil

Lemon Rice

1 tbsp olive oil
1 cup cherry tomatoes halved
6 cloves garlic minced
1 tsp dried oregano
¼ tsp salt
1/4 tsp black pepper
1 cup spinach chopped
2 cups basmati rice cooked
15 oz can chickpeas rinsed and drained
1 lemon juiced

Cheese

1 cup feta cheese crumbled
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
¼ tsp dried oregano
2 tbsp fresh dill chopped

Garnish

Lemon cut into wedges
Fresh dill chopped

Instructions

Chicken

In a small bowl, combine paprika, garlic powder, dried oregano, red pepper flakes, salt and black pepper. Cover diced chicken with the mixture of spices. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add in the olive oil. Once hot, add in the chicken and sear for 4 minutes on one side, then flip and cook for another 4 minutes on the other side. Remove the chicken from the skillet once it's fully cooked.

Lemon Rice

Add olive oil into the same, now empty skillet. Add in the cherry tomatoes, garlic, dried oregano, salt, and black pepper. Stir and cook for 2 minutes until the tomatoes soften. Add in spinach and cook for another 2 minutes until it wilts. Add cooked basmati rice, chickpeas

and give it a stir. Finally, squeeze over all the juice from the lemon. Let it cook for another 2-3 minutes.

Assembly

In a bowl, combine feta cheese, olive oil, oregano and fresh dill. Add half of the cheese mixture into the skillet and stir it in. Add the cooked chicken back into the skillet and cook until the chicken reheats. Remove from heat, and sprinkle with the remaining cheese mixture. Garnish with lemon wedges and fresh dill before serving. When eating, squeeze some of the lemon juice from the wedges for a little more acidity. Enjoy!

How to Modify This Recipe

- However, there are several ways in which you can modify this recipe. Here are some ideas to change things up.
- Vegetarian Option: Replace the chicken with marinated tofu, tempeh, or extra chickpeas for a fully plant-based version.
- Pescatarian Twist: Swap the chicken for grilled shrimp or salmon seasoned with the same spice blend.
- Add Some Crunch: Add a handful of toasted pine nuts or sunflower seeds for extra crunch (and protein).
- Spicy Kick: Add some extra heat by adding more red pepper flakes or drizzling some harissa sauce over the finished dish.

Storage Tips

- Store any leftovers you have in an airtight container and place it in the fridge for up to 3-4 days.
- Now, while it is preferable to have this dish fresh, you can freeze the rice and the chicken for up to 2 months. This makes it very handy when you need to assemble something quickly.
- When you want to have this delicious meal again, warm the rice and chicken in a skillet on medium heat. Try adding a splash of water or broth to make sure it doesn't dry out.



Easy Pineapple Pork Chop

Easy Pineapple Pork Chops

Prep: 5 mins Cook: 15 mins
Total: 20 mins Servings: 4

Easy pineapple pork chops combine juicy and tender pork chops with the sweet and sour flavors of pineapple, onion and garlic, and just a touch of honey for added sweetness. This quick pork skillet is the perfect quick weeknight meal.

Ingredients

4 pork chops, boneless (medium size)
Sea salt, to season
Ground black pepper, to season
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon butter, unsalted
4 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
1 small white onion, peeled and sliced
1 1/2 cups pineapple, cut in cubes
2 tablespoons honey
Fresh cilantro and green onions for garnish

Serve with rice or quinoa

Instructions

Season pork chops with salt and pepper. Next heat a large skillet with oil on medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic to the skillet and saute for 2 minutes. Place the pork chops into the hot large skillet along with the onions and cook on one side for 4-5 minutes until golden. Then push the pork chop to one side of the skillet to make space and flip the pork chops to cook the other side. Make the sweet and sour sauce, by adding the butter, and pineapple chunks into the empty space in the skillet. Stir the sauce over the pork chops and coat the pork chops with the sauce. Cook the pork chops in the sauce for about 3-5 minutes until the pork chops reach an internal temp of 145 degrees F. Finally decrease the heat to medium and add in the honey. Stir through the pineapple sauce and remove from the heat and set aside to rest for 5 minutes. Serve the pork and pineapple sauce with a side of white rice and garnish with some freshly chopped cilantro. You also could serve this with pineapple slices on the side or add extra pineapple chunks as a garnish to your pork chops.

Notes

How to store leftovers: Allow to cool down. Store in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 3 days. How to freeze: Allow to cool down and place in an airtight container for up to 1 month



Balsamic Glazed Chicken & Veggies

Servings: 4 Servings
Prep 10 minutes Cook 13 minutes
Ready in: 23 minutes

Ingredients

1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp Italian salad dressing
3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 1/2 Tbsp honey
1/8 tsp crushed red pepper flakes (more or less to taste)
1 1/4 lbs chicken breast tenderloins
2 Tbsp olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 lb fresh asparagus , trimmed of tough ends, chopped into 2-inch pieces (look for thinner stalks. Green beans are another good option)
1 1/2 cups matchstick carrots
1 cup grape tomatoes , halved

Instructions

In a mixing bowl whisk together salad dressing, balsamic vinegar, honey and red pepper flakes, set aside. Heat olive oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper to taste, then place chicken evenly in skillet. Cook about 6 - 7 minutes, rotating once halfway through cooking, until chicken has cooked through (meanwhile, chop asparagus and tomatoes). Add half the dressing mixture to skillet and rotate chicken to evenly coat. Transfer chicken to a large plate or a serving platter while leaving sauce in skillet. Add asparagus and carrots to skillet, season with salt and pepper to taste and cook, stirring frequently, until crisp tender, about 4 minutes. Transfer veggies to plate or platter with chicken. Add remaining dressing mixture to skillet and cook, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 1 minute. Add tomatoes to chicken and veggies and drizzle dressing mixture in pan over top (or return chicken and veggies to pan and toss to coat). Then serve with steamed rice or mashed potatoes.

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Social Tidbits Montreal Community News Fely Rosales Cariño

Welcome to summer my dearest social tidbits readers! Are you enjoying the beautiful sunshine and warm weather yet? And if you're staying indoors, I'd like to imagine you with an espresso at the corner coffee shop reading your favorite North American Filipino Star. Inquiring minds want to know the latest in the social grapevine and this column strives to accommodate your wishes. And a Happy 127th Philippine Independence, mga kababayans! We've come a long way. Another reason to celebrate is the establishment of the month of June as our Philippine Heritage Month. Indeed, we have a busy social calendar. Let's dive in.

Munting Binibining Pilipinas 2025, FAMAS

Something exciting happened at the Palace Convention Center, 1717 Boul. Le Corbusier in Laval on May 11, 2025. This is the much awaited Coronation of the Munting Binibining Pilipinas 2025 sponsored by the Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs (FAMAS). Let's pay homage to former FAMAS President Angelita Ogerio, founder of Munting Binibining Pilipinas, the highest source of fundraising that significantly benefitted the Philippine Community Center. Thank you, Miss Angie! And it seems like destiny that the very first Munting Binibini was Caterina Ogerio Mazzone, her niece. Undoubtedly it is now part of a delightful family history.

Current FAMAS President (and Over-all Chairman of the event) Nida Quirapas was assisted by her two co-chairpersons Carmelita Cuizon (Pageant Chairman) and Leah Baldelovar (FAMAS Secretary). Much work and sweat goes into staging an event such as this. Congratulations to the FAMAS team for their all-out effort and perseverance. And the judges for the Team Wear and Talent Competition were Councilor Stephanie Valenzuela, Anjie Lou Peñallar, and Richel Llacer. Miss Valenzuela was on double duty as she also delivered the Inspirational Message.

Congratulations to the winners of the Munting Binibining Pilipinas 2025 starting with 4th Runner up Aerine Celestino (Manila), 3rd Runner up Maria Angela Ramirez (Mindanao), 2nd Runner up Rhian Nachell Langcuanon (Visayas), and 1st Runner up Naomi Olga Zaragoza (Luzon). Before announcing this year's winner was the traditional farewell walk of 2023 Munting Binibining Pilipinas Montreal, Elyssee-Reuven Escape Padua. Finally, the star of the evening, Munting Binibining Pilipinas Montreal 2025 is . . . drum roll please . . . Her Majesty, Queen Angelina Perriera Mazzone! Proud Crown Bearer was Nicodemo Mazzone. Escorts were Antonino Catania, Nicolas Perriera, and Noah Perriera. It's all in the family!

The event proceeded smoothly under the able hands of the Master of Ceremonies Cynthia Puray. Photographer Bryan Davis was on hand to record precious memories and DJ Denis Mayuga gave the crowd what it wanted, very danceable music! See you at the Munting Binibining Pilipinas 2027! **Independence Party, FCAWI**

Filipino Canadian Association of West Island (FCAWI) held their Independence Party celebrations on May 30, 2025. It was held at Olympia Reception Hall on 3855 St. Jean Blvd., DDO. Dennis Mayuga played a slew of rock and roll music before starting the program with the national anthems. FCAWI President Lorna Mangaser welcomed the guests. Invocation was delivered by Francis Apgao. Then dinner was served. After dinner, two songs were rendered by Rodolfo Mangaser and Philip Ramirez. Virgilio Pablo introduced Guest Speaker Brigitte Garceau, MNA for Robert-Baldwin riding. Ms. Garceau expressed appreciations for all the activities FCAWI members are doing to promote awareness of our history through dance, food and music.

I also commend Dennis for getting the sound of music right! The selection of zumba, line dancing, cha-cha, boogie woogie, tango and many other music with the same fun sounds will awaken the dancing spirit in anybody. And you know what the biggest draw was? It was the line dancing; it always is. There's just something about line dancing that even the most reserved person is enticed to join the dance floor. Towards the end, emcee par excellence Jobelle Gucco announced the following FCAWI officers: Lorna Mangaser (President), Jing Pablo (Vice President), Imelda Ramirez (Secretary), Philip Ramirez (Asst. Secretary), Fely Balles (Treasurer), Karie Cortez (Asst. Treasurer), Chris Salazar (Auditor), Bonie Lingon (Asst. Auditor), Nola Manuel (Public Relations Officer), Romy Ilagan (Sergeant at Arms). Special honored guest was DDO Mayor Alex Bottausci who was gracious and gentlemanly as ever. Thank you, Alex, for always reserving your time to our Filipino events.

Alab Ng Kultura, FHSM

On the morning of May 31, 2025 Alab ng Kultura, sponsored by the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM), presented a plethora of activities through dance, music, story telling and plenty of food. The grand salon of 6767 Côte-des-Neiges was certainly filled with people who wanted a peak at the 'flame' (a simple translation of Alab). The program began with a welcome address by Al Abdon, FHSM Chairman. Marvin Rotrand then handed Gawad medals to former awardees and Stephanie Valenzuela (Councilor, Snowdon District) gave an encouraging

speech to the crowd.

Edith Fedalizo (FHSM Cultural & Arts Director) introduced the participants. Ray Omictin, President of the Kalikuhang Bisaya led the story telling of the Omictin's family. Then the audience was treated to an Igorot Coursthip Dance by Bibak (introduced by Girlie Ayodo), Ilocano religious songs by Mark Simbulan of FilCan Idols, a folk dance by FHSM's Golden Maidens, and a cultural classical song, Sa Kabukiran, by soprano Silka Tandoc.

The second part of the program was dominated by a fashion show (a parade of costumes worn by the audience) introduced by Jane Cayanan (FHSM Director). There was a karaoke session with members of the audience until 3pm. The refreshments were marked 'A Taste of Philippine Cuisine.' And for this pleasure we must thank Chez Papa Restaurant, Norte Restaurant, Pinoy Pansitan, Fiesta Filipino Boulangerie, Dolly Blandres, Amelia Manon-og, Jane Cayanan, and Fely Bisares as the food sponsors. It must also be noted that a moment of silence was observed as a tribute to the Lapu Lapu Festival Tragedy victims led by Amelia Manon-og. FHSM Vice Chairman. Jane Cayanan and Edith Fedalizo were the emcees for the day.

Filipino Heritage Month, FHSM

On the evening of May 31, 2025 was the Launch of the Filipino Heritage Month at the Grand Salon on 6767 Côte-des-Neiges under the banner of the FHSM. tireless creator of the event and FHSM Chairman Al Abdon & wife Cora graciously met guests. The evening began with the singing of the national anthems. The theme of the gathering was to emphasize the month of June as the Filipino Heritage Month. On hand to support Filipinos was Marvin Rotrand (Director General, United Against Hate Canada) and wife Jacqui. Marvin reminded all of us the need for a Heritage Month to emphasize the deep meaning of our culture through a variety of activities. Another honored guest was Mr. Sonny Moroz (Councilor, Snowdon District) who gave a solid speech in defense of the English language. It was beneficial to many English-speaking citizens, including Filipinos of Montreal. Thank you, Sonny! And not to be missed were TV's Pinoy Pa Rin Tenne Rose Dayandante, Derwin Collantes, and Michael Davantes. Other notables were Lilia Esguerra, representing the English Montreal School Board (EMSB), Ray Omictin, and past FAMAS Presidents Angie Ogerio and Julie Parado. It's always a dress up night in formal gatherings and this night was no different. It was fitting that many FHSM ladies were dressed to the hilt in their latest Filipiniana attires while the men were in their traditional barongs. And thank you, Al and Marvin for introducing

the whole concept of the Heritage Month to different communities in Montreal.

QACFT 29th Anniversary & Recognition Night

On May 31, 2025, The Quebec Association of Canadian-Filipino Teachers (QACFT) held their 29th Anniversary Awards Night at 6767 Côte-des-Neiges. Every time the teachers hold their annual event, the founder, yours truly, gets a little bit nostalgic. Why, it seems just like yesterday when the QACFT was born. Out of all the gatherings in the year's social calendar, this is one where I cannot afford to miss. As one enters the party room, one notices the different way the tables are identified. Instead of the usually numbered tables, they are marked with labels such as Fortitude, Altruism, Empathy, Charity, Bravery, Loyalty, Justice, Amity, and Love. How creative! Imagine calling the Bravery table for their turn at the dessert, for example. And the place was well decorated, the officers were well-dressed, and the crowd felt closely knit. The evening began with the Introduction of the QACFT Executive Board of 2024-2026 and President Elsa Montealegre (2016) then gave the Invocation. Current President Elvira 'Bing' Estopa delivered the welcome address. In almost 30 years, there were a lot of sweat and tears but a lot of victories too. Looking at the people, there was a delightful mix of the young and older generation, the young and the restless, as I prefer to describe them. It was certainly pleasing to the teachers to see the room fill to capacity that chairs were added to accommodate incoming guests. The dancing area became just a bit smaller but did nothing to deter the highly energetic dance crowd. And unknown to some, a literary contest was held since 2014. This was a way to expose students to declamation and recitation. Some of the goals of the QACFT is to fund schools in impoverished and far flung areas in the Philippines. Endowing two handpicked schools with 500\$ each would certainly be a relief to them. It might seem like a small dollar amount, but in pesos it's still sizable. Another goal of the QACFT is to promote the Filipino language among the youth. You will be interested to know that there's a Filipino class on Sundays, 1-3 pm at St. Malachy Parish on 5330 Clanranald, Montreal.

The special presentations began with an impressive recitation of Ang Mabuting Bata by Peden Bienlouis A. Bautista, the Champion in Poetry Recitation (also 1st Runner-up in Declamation Elementary). He spoke flawless Tagalog; Filipinos should be proud! Next was Zeth Emmanuel Agbayani, who spoke splendidly, proving himself to be a deserving

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Social Tidbits

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FILIPINO STAR

SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Barbie Forteza keeps it classy

The actress was all business—until the questions got personal.



Barbie Forteza

Liza Soberano made a stunner as Kapuso sweetheart Barbie Forteza is choosing poise over chismis as she gracefully sidestepped any talk about her ex, fellow actor Jak Roberto.

At the press con for her upcoming series *Beauty Empire*, the actress was all business—until the questions got personal.

When asked if she had officially moved on from her much-talked-about relationship, Barbie didn't skip a beat: "I am very happy," she said. Twice. As if to put a polite period on the topic.

But the press, ever-curious, pressed on.

Barbie, unfazed and unfailingly polite, offered a gentle boundary. "I'm so sorry, but I prefer not to talk about it to respect the relationship," she said, with the kind of tact that deserves its own crown in the *Beauty Empire* universe.

No shade. No cryptic quotes. Just pure pageant-level grace.

While the internet may continue to speculate, Barbie's message is clear: she's focused on her present, not her past. And with her star power only growing brighter, that seems like the better headline anyway.

So, is she happy? Very. Is she talking about Jak? Not today. ■

Anne Curtis sports edgy new look for Erik Matti project



Anne Curtis

Anne Curtis has unveiled a bold new look—a shaggy "wolf mullet" haircut—as she gears up for her next film with director Erik Matti.

The actress shared a transformation video on Instagram, captioned, "Let the wolf out. New do as I reunite with legendary director @erikmatti for a very kick*ss project."

The edgy hairstyle features textured layers and a voluminous crown, marking a departure from

Curtis's previous looks.

While details about the film remain under wraps, fans have speculated that the hairstyle signals another intense role for the actress. Matti fueled the buzz by commenting on the post, "Cat is out of the bag!!!"

This marks the duo's first collaboration since *BuyBust* in 2018, where Curtis earned praise for her physically demanding role as an anti-narcotics agent. ■

Maris Racal shocked with 18M views of 'Sunshine' trailer



Maris Racal

The critically-acclaimed movie "Sunshine" is once again participating in an international film festival -- this time, it will be part of the 2025 Taipei Film Festival.

Early Friday morning, lead actress Maris Racal departed for Taiwan with high hopes that the audience will love her film.

"Our movie is once again part of a film festival, part of exhibition of films there," Maris told ABS-CBN News before departing for Taipei. "At this point it's more than 10 (festivals participated) now, I've only been to three film festivals."

In addition to the Taipei Film

Festival, "Sunshine" also will be part of the the 2025 New York Asian Film Festival (NYAFF).

The official trailer of her movie has raked in more than 18 million views across all platforms, as of June 19. The Kapamilya star was surprised with the overwhelming numbers, signifying a strong public interest and curiosity for the film.

"Grabe! It's amazing, very unexpected na mamahalin 'yung trailer. Nakakatuwa 'yung reactions ng mga tao. They already felt the gravity of the film, even though it's just one minute and 20 seconds long. Malaking bagay na iyon para sa amin, sa buong production and I hope talaga mapanood siya ng mga tao," she said.

She added, "Kung sa 'Incognito' isa akong sundalo, dito isa akong rhythmic gymnast, nagtraining din ako for gymnastics. Honestly, it's almost two or three years of hard work and we're hoping for the success."

"Sunshine" will premiere exclusively in SM Cinemas nationwide on July 23 and received an R-16 rating from the MTRCB. ■

The changes in Daniel Padilla: 'Mas tumibay ang sarili ko ngayon'

At the renewal of his endorsement for Don Macchiatos coffee held at the BGC in Taguig City on June 18, Kapamilya star Daniel Padilla appears to be happy and content after recently turning 30. He feels increasingly fulfilled as he matures, with a greater sense of purpose in life that extends beyond just earning money.

Wala na akong mahihiling pa sa sarili ko. I prepare for the future of my family. Hindi na rin ako bata. I'm 30. So I have to think of my future. So we have to be wise. Kaibigan natin ang pera pero hindi natin Diyos yan. (I can't ask for anything more for myself. I prepare for the future of my family. I'm not a child anymore. I'm 30. So I have to think of my future. So we have to be wise. Money is our friend, but it's not our God), said Daniel.

The actor believes he has achieved balance in everything he does, stating that he knows himself better now.

Balance lang (sa buhay). No. 1 yun para sa akin. And then timing. Before kasi, sobrang busy at kinikilala mo pa ang sarili mo. But now mas kilala ko na ang sarili ko ngayon. Nababalanse ko na ang mga bagay. Araw-araw na akong gumigising na may purpose. Hindi na ako maliligaw kung ano ang gusto kong mangyari sa akin. (Just



Daniel Padilla

balance (in life). That's No. 1 for me. And then timing. Before, you were so busy and you were still recognizing yourself. But now I know myself better. I'm able to balance things. I wake up every day with a purpose. I'm no longer lost in what I want to happen to me.)

Daniel added: Hindi ko maisa-isa ang mga pagbabago sa sarili ko. You grow. With all the experiences you've been through, I've gained

more wisdom ... and composure. Being happy is subjective. May purpose na talaga ako sa buhay ko. Mas tumibay ang sarili ko ngayon. (I can't pinpoint the changes in myself. You grow. With all the experiences you've been through, I've gained more wisdom ... and composure. Being happy is subjective. I have a purpose in my life. I feel more confident now.)

Asked about his purpose, Daniel

said: Secret. Then the small crowd laughed. Kidding aside, kay Lord lang. He admits to meditating for 10 minutes as soon as he wakes up in the morning.

The hunk actor said he just arrived from Marawi, where they shot scenes for the hit Kapamilya action series Incognito, which is nearing its finale.

I'm very happy sa lahat ng sumusuporta sa Incognito. Patuloy na tinatangkilik ang aming show at yun nga, malapit na ang katapusan sana patuloy n'yo pa rin na abangan. Kababalik lang namin galing Marawi. (I'm very happy for everyone who supports Incognito. We continue to enjoy our show, and that's it, the end is near. I hope you continue to watch. We just returned from Marawi), he said.

Daniel did not reveal any new project after Incognito. But if he had his way, Daniel said he wanted to focus on action projects.

The actor wants to be productive daily; his day feels incomplete without accomplishing something.

Hindi ako mapakali na wala akong ginagawa. So lahat ng pwede kong gawin sa araw na ito, ginagawa ko na. I want to be productive. (I can't stand the thought of doing nothing. So everything I can do today, I'm doing. I want to be productive), he added. ■

Maine Mendoza recounts 'Eat Bulaga' audition: 'A gift I'll forever be thankful for'



Maine Mendoza

Maine Mendoza celebrated the 10th anniversary of her audition to the longest-running noontime show "Eat Bulaga," saying she wouldn't have the life she has now if it weren't for that opportunity.

Through her Instagram page on Thursday, June 19, the TV host-actress showed a clip of when she introduced herself during the audition, alongside a recent video of her introducing herself as a "legit Dabarkads since 2015."

"A decade ago—where it all began," she said in the caption.

In a separate post on her Instagram channel, Mendoza said, "Had I not shown up that day, I wouldn't have the life I live now. And you're probably tired of hearing this, but I'll always be grateful for having the courage to show up that day, ten years ago—over fear and uncertainty, I chose to take the chance."

She further noted that while she may have come unprepared at

the time, she was "in the right place at the right time, surrounded by the right people."

"I'll always be grateful to the dear ones who took a chance on me. Whatever reasons they had, I'm thankful they gave the 'batang walang kalatuy-latoy' a shot," she continued.

"It's still surreal to think how things unfolded from that day forward. What I've done to deserve all of this—even being called to audition on the longest-running noontime show—will always be a mystery to me," she added. "A gift I'll forever be thankful for."

Mendoza also declared that she is happy to still be standing where it all started. "Right here is where I will ALWAYS choose to be."

Mendoza, who had the moniker Yaya Dub, rose to fame as one-half of the noontime show's now-defunct love team AIDub. ■

British-Indian man lone survivor of Air India crash

13 Jun 2025 14:41 | Viswash Kumar

Ramesh is the only known survivor of the London-bound Air India flight carrying 242 people that crashed shortly after takeoff in the north-west Indian city of Ahmedabad.

The 40-year-old is one of the 53 British nationals plus 169 Indian nationals, one Canadian and seven Portuguese nationals who were onboard the Boeing 787 Dreamliner as passengers in addition to two pilots and 10 cabin crew.

He had been sitting near an emergency exit, in seat 11A, of the London-bound flight and managed to jump out, Ahmedabad senior police officer Vidhi Chaudhary said.

"Thirty seconds after takeoff there was a loud noise and then the plane crashed. It all happened so quickly," Mr Viswash told the Hindustan Times from a general ward in the civil hospital in Asarwa, Ahmedabad.

"When I got up, there were bodies all around me. I was scared. I stood up and ran. There were pieces of the plane all around me. Someone grabbed hold of me and put me in an

ambulance and brought me to the hospital," he added.

Social media footage shown on Indian news channels showed a man in a bloodstained white T-shirt and dark pants limping on a street and being helped by a medic. The man had bruises on his face and a goatee, resembling photographs of Mr Viswash in hospital after the crash that were published by local media. The survivor told the Hindustan Times he was returning to the UK, where he has lived for 20 years, with his brother, who was also on the same flight, after visiting family in India.

Dr Dhaval Gameti, who treated Mr Viswash, said: "He was disorientated, with multiple injuries all over his body. But he seems to be out of danger."

The Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner was engulfed in a huge fireball after crashing into the Meghani Nagar residential area minutes after taking off at 1.38pm local time (09:08 BST) on Thursday.

Mr Ajay Valgi, a cousin of Mr Viswash who lives in Leicester, central England, told the BBC that Mr Viswash spoke by phone to confirm he was all

proud! Congratulations to the hardworking QACFT officers who made the evening a success and a special thank you to our super Emcee of the evening, Joseph Gonzales, who kept the pace of the activities crisp and sharp. Last but not least, QACFT President Bing Estopa, with her Executive Board, deserve a lot of credit for the great success of the event.

Independence Ball, SWIS

The SWIS did it again! Yes, the Seniors of West Island and Suburbs held their Independence Ball on June 6, 2025 at Olympia Reception Hall on 3865 St. Jean Boulevard in DDO. And again they showed almost record breaking attendance as in previous years. The reason? It is the repeat attendees, good entertainment and the DJ's lively music. Besides the spacious dance floor, food was in abundance. Nita Advincula, the choreographer, presented a folk dance performed by SWIS dancers. Part of the choreography was the presence of Jean Boucher, a sorbetero complete with a bell to announce that ice cream is being sold in the vicinity. We hope to keep the same ambiance as in previous years.

Guest speaker was DDO Mayor Alex Bottausci, a very busy man due to other engagements that night. This is how popular our mayor is. This is because of his leadership in guiding his team to do what's best for the DDO population. His projects indicate that his team is sensitive to the needs of the people and does what's necessary for its completion. He was also told that he was very handsome! Thank you Alex for being our gracious guest speaker once more.

Chairwoman Lolita Odulio, who leads the SWIS team, has many plans in her hands. The SWIS members are there to back her up. She introduces ideas and everybody is prepared to support her. That's a sign of a good leader!



Mr Viswash Kumar Ramesh is the only known survivor out of the 242 people aboard the Air India flight, which crashed in the Indian city of Ahmedabad on June 12. PHOTOS: SCREENGRAAB FROM OSINTUPDATES/X, HINDUSTAN TIMES

right.

"He only said that he was fine, nothing else," Mr Valgi said, adding that the family had not heard anything about the brother.

"We're not doing well. We're all upset," he said. Mr Viswash is married and has a son, he added.

London Gatwick Airport said a reception centre was being set up for

relatives of passengers.

UK officials are being deployed to India to support the investigation, the Air Accidents Investigation Branch said. Keir Starmer, the UK prime minister, said the crash was "devastating", while the Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi, said it was "heartbreaking beyond words".#

Advertisement was by word of mouth, flyers, and by colorful displays of items for sale. What a vibrant marketplace it was, a showcase of the richness of the Filipino culture. FHSM rented 21 tables to exhibit an assortment of merchandise for sale. Business entrepreneurs ably displayed their wares to maximum effect. For instance, Gawang Pinoy was crowded as customers were allowed to try the barongs and the kimono on display. Those who sold clothes had their hangers full of different sizes for men, women, and children. The blinking Christmas lanterns were very attractive. There was plenty of food: puto bongbong, chicharon, coffee, boiled corn, and a selection of fruit juices, hot dogs, etc. The salon was packed in the afternoon. Amy Manon-og made almost a hundred dollars for her educational fund donation. Cora Abdon made a sizeable amount from her coffee & hot dog snacks. Tianggehan was so much fun! You had to be there. This coverage isn't enough to impart the buzz of Tianggehan 2025. Aside from the joy of buying and selling, it is safe to say for sure, we will have Tianggehan again next year. Such was its success!

Well, this month's entry was full but other events ran as well. We thank the Lord for His abundant provision of good food, good weather, and good people who serve the Filipino community. In 2 Corinthians 9:8 it says, "And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." Thank you, God, for being the Great Provider. May we use Your riches to serve each other unreservedly and ungrudgingly, in all sincerity.

Until Next issue and may God bless you !

o0o

From Page 13 Social Tidbits

Champion in Orator (High School).

And here are two more worthy awardees: Amelia Frances Cabinta (Champion in Declamation, Elementary) and Nazhelle Hestia Hernandez (Champion in Declamation, High School). Other meritorious recipients were: Zach Andrew Agbayani (1st Runner-up in Poetry Recitation), Shawn George Wood (2nd Runner-up in Poetry Recitation), Kyla Cassandra Espinosa (1st Runner-up in Declamation, (High School), Alexandra-Pia Espinosa (2nd Runner-up in Declamation, High School), Ezra Christelle Guamos (2nd Runner-up in Declamation, Elementary), Rhaynier Louie E. Yusi (1st Runner-up in Orator), and Rosselle Jenrose E. Yusi (2nd Runner-up in Orator).

The QACFT Filipino class kids performed a dance number that was fun to watch! Furthermore, they sang a song in Filipino also, a definite treat! Kudos to this upcoming generation who awakens our Filipino pride! Also a big thank you to Alma and Sophia who presented a surprise dance number. Dinner was wonderful and many went for seconds and thirds. Dancing began to the irresistible music especially with line dancing, a sure Filipino favorite.

The grand moment of the evening was the presentation of the lone QACFT Teacher Awardee of 2025, Ethel Joy Lasaten. She hails from Batac, Ilocos Norte and is married to Rex Valerio; they have two sons. She earned her teaching degree at Baguio Colleges Foundation, completed Accounting at the Lester B. Pearson Continuing Education Center, and now works as an Accounting Clerk at Fuel Transport, Inc (Lasalle). This young mom is indeed versatile and is also multilingual; she speaks Tagalog, Ilocano, English, and French. Best wishes for making us

10th Anniversary Celebration, AFSM

On June 7, 2025, the Association of Filipino Seniors of Montreal (AFSM) celebrated their 10th Anniversary at the Grand Salon of 6767 Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal. The program started with DJ Dennis Mayuga playing the national anthems. William Fabia, Alain Charbonneau, and Felimon Delormente were the flag bearers. Invocation was by yours truly. AFSM President Reuben Mendoza delivered his Welcome Address. This party was really a dinner-dance affair: very good dinner and very vigorous dancing. After a raffle draw, musical entertainment followed. Jun Bonyad rendered a vocal solo. Two line dancing enthusiasts – D'Easy Dance Group line dancing led by Boy Galang and the Bestie Dance Group danced up a storm for most of the evening and Joseph Gonzales clamored for more dancing. Many presidents of numerous Filipino associations were in attendance: Dario Boco (President, Council of Canadian-Filipino Association of Quebec, CCFAQ) & Claire, Minda Mazzone (President, Federation of Canadian-Filipino Association of Quebec, FCFAQ) & Nico, Gerry Danzil (President, United Pilipino Seniors of Quebec, UPSQ) & Linda, James de la Paz (Founder of CCFAQ) & Rose. Marilyn Mendoza, the president's wife, and Neneh Fabia were seen very welcoming to the incoming crowd. All of the beautiful AFSM ladies were busy all night receiving guests as there were many latecomers. Many wanted to come and celebrate; better late than never! There was a shout out for William Fabia who was celebrating his birthday. Belated Happy Birthday to William!

Montreal Tianggehan 2025

Early in the morning of June 8, the FHSM held a fun Tianggehan (pop up market) at 6767 Côte-des-Neiges.

Meet Quebec's new Liberal leader, Pablo Rodriguez, as he steps in to rebuild his party

Former federal minister Pablo Rodriguez was elected leader on June 14, 2025, in a decisive moment for Quebec's Liberal Party, capturing just over 52.3 percent of the vote after two rounds in a race with five candidates. This victory marks a turning point for the party, which faces a challenging rebuild ahead of the October 2026 provincial election.

A leader with federal pedigree

Born in Argentina and raised in Sherbrooke from the age of eight, Rodriguez brings a wealth of experience to provincial politics. He represented Montreal's Honoré Mercier riding as a Liberal MP from 2004–2011 and again from 2015–2025.

His experience includes high profile roles as Minister of Transport and Minister of Canadian Heritage within former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's cabinet. He stepped down from the federal cabinet and caucus to pursue this leader

The leadership contest

The leadership contest, held between June 9 and 14 in Quebec City, drew five contenders. Charles Milliard, the former head of the Quebec Chambers of Commerce, ran a close second, receiving around 47.7 percent in the final round. Other notable candidates included Karl



Il faut se débarrasser de ce mauvais gouvernement et éviter la menace d'un autre référendum », a dit Pablo Rodriguez dans son discours de victoire. (Photo d'archives) Photo : La Presse canadienne / Joel Ryan

(We must get rid of this bad government and prevent the threat of another referendum, said Pablo Rodriguez in his victory speech).

Blackburn, Marc Bélanger, and Mario Roy, who were eliminated in the first ballot.

On stage, Rodriguez reached across former rival lines, inviting all contenders forward in a gesture of unity. "No matter who you supported, we're all together today, united," he told volunteers. He also praised Milliard specifically, saying he sees great value in his experience and foresight.

Speaking after the win,

Rodriguez struck a hopeful tone as he said "Starting today, the work begins," he said, pledging to convene with campaign teams and caucus as one united entity preparing for 2026. Notably, he does not yet hold a seat in the National Assembly and said he will not rush to enter through a by-election. Instead, he plans to tour every riding, region, and community to strengthen the party at the grassroots level.

The challenges ahead

The Liberals are rebuilding

from a steep decline after they were swept from power in 2018 and sinking to just 21 seats and 14 percent in 2022, a historic low under former leader Dominique Anglade. More troubling, the party has struggled to resonate with francophone voters outside Montreal.

Yet there are signs of renewed optimism. A Léger poll from May showed the Liberals, under Rodriguez, leading the Parti Québécois by one point at 31 percent.

Meanwhile, incumbent Premier François Legault's CAQ government is losing support, while the PQ is surging, setting the stage for a potential three way struggle in the next election.

Now, Rodriguez must translate this energy into a strategy that appeals not just in Montreal, but in all corners of Quebec. With a provincial election looming in 16 months, the stakes could not be higher.

Whether this former federal heavyweight can revive a fractured party, and perhaps rewrite the province's political narrative, remains Quebec's most compelling question.

With files from the Economic Times updated June 15, 2025.

Prime Minister Carney concludes 2025 G7 Leaders' Summit

KANANASKIS, AB, June 17, 2025 /CNW/ - In an increasingly dangerous and divided world, co-operation with reliable partners is more important than ever. With G7 partners, Canada will build a new era of collaboration – one rooted in mutual support and resilient partnerships. Canada is ready to lead.

Today, the Prime Minister, Mark Carney, concluded his participation in the 2025 G7 Leaders' Summit in Kananaskis, Alberta. Under Canada's Presidency, this G7

deepened co-operation with joint statements in the following areas:

- Securing critical minerals supply chains
- Adopting, powering, and sharing artificial intelligence
- Collaborating on quantum innovation
- Preventing, fighting, and recovering from wildfires
- Countering foreign interference, including transnational repression
- Fighting transnational crime, such as migrant smuggling

Prime Minister Carney also



Leaders pose for a family photo at the 2025 G7 summit in Kananaskis on Monday, June 16, 2025. From left are; European Council President Antonio Costa, Prime Minister of Japan Shigeru Ishiba, Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni, President of France Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister of Canada Mark Carney, President of the United States Donald Trump, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Keir Starmer, Chancellor of Germany Friedrich Merz and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen. Gavin Young/Postmedia

announced the following measures in support of Ukraine:

- Sanctions on individuals, entities, and vessels that continue to support Russia's aggression in Ukraine.
- An additional \$2 billion in military assistance this year.
- The disbursement of a \$2.3 billion loan to Ukraine through the G7
- Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration Loans mechanism.
- The allocation of \$57.4 million in security-related assistance.

Canada will also be taking

action to build stronger economies and international systems:

- \$391.3 million to catalyze private capital toward economic growth and development projects around the world.
- \$185.6 million to accelerate the adoption and commercialization of artificial intelligence.
- \$120.4 million to global wildfire prevention, response, and recovery.
- \$80.3 million to build reliable critical



Then-Chancellor Angela Merkel during a meeting with President Trump and other leaders at the 2018 G7 meeting in Canada, in a photograph released by the German government.Credit...Jesco Denze/German Cabinet

See Page 18 G7 2025 Summit

Trump abruptly leaves G7 summit after signalling deepening Israel-Iran conflicts

Eli Stokols and Adam Cancryn
06/16/2025 08:05 PM EDT

KANANASKIS, Alberta — President Donald Trump abruptly announced that he would leave the G7 summit a day early and return to Washington shortly after posting an ominous social media message that appeared to suggest more carnage in Iran.

Press secretary Karoline Leavitt, in a post on X, said that “much was accomplished” during Trump’s meetings on Monday with other leaders at the summit in Canada. But, she continued, “because of what’s going on in the Middle East, President Trump will be leaving tonight after dinner with Heads of State.”

The change of plans only added to the sense of uncertainty around Israel’s ongoing military operation in Iran, which Trump seemed to warn was about to intensify in an ominous and somewhat cryptic social media post after a day of meeting with world leaders.

“Iran should have signed the ‘deal’ I told them to sign. What a shame, and waste of human life,” Trump wrote in a TruthSocial post late Monday. “Simply stated, IRAN CAN NOT HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON. I said it over and over again!”

He closed it on an alarming note: “Everyone should immediately evacuate Tehran!”

The post came after a long day of meetings with world leaders at the G7 summit, where European officials suggested that the U.S. was holding up a joint statement calling for an end to the burgeoning conflict between Israel and Iran.

It’s not clear what triggered the startling message, casually calling for the evacuation of a city of 10 million people — a warning that came just hours after Israel’s government issued

its own evacuation order to citizens in northern Tehran warning them of its anything that took place during the summit, which continued with a dinner



Italy’s Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, from left, France’s President Emmanuel Macron, Canada’s Prime Minister Mark Carney, President Donald Trump, Britain’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Germany’s Chancellor Friedrich Merz participate in a session of the G7 Summit, Monday, June 16, 2025, in Kananaskis, Canada. (AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein)

expanding campaign.

Nor was it clear whether Trump is privy to new plans by Israel to strike at additional targets inside Iran, or simply trying to scare Tehran back into nuclear talks.

Officials at the White House and the Pentagon sought to clarify in nearly identical posts on X that U.S. forces in the region would remain in a “defensive” posture and were not about to join Israel’s offensive.

When Trump posed with leaders for the G-7 “family photo” before heading back to the airport, he told members of the press on hand that events in the Middle East left him little choice.

“I have to be back as soon as I can,” the president said, making clear his departure was not a response to

Monday evening and more meetings on Tuesday.

“I wish I could stay for tomorrow, but they understand,” Trump said of the other leaders.

His comments to reporters earlier on Monday, in between meetings with other world leaders, were more explicit in that regard.

“Iran is not winning this war, and they should talk and they should talk immediately before it’s too late,” Trump said.

A short while later, when asked again about the situation in Iran, the president was more optimistic: “I think Iran basically is at the negotiating table. They want to make a deal and as soon as I leave here we’re going to be doing something,” he said.

The president’s abrupt

departure harkened back to the last G7 summit in Canada in 2018, when Trump left in turmoil after refusing to sign onto the joint communique out of frustration with then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

While Trump has gotten along far better with his successor, Prime Minister Mark Carney, his penchant for drama at these multilateral gatherings has not abated.

After weeks of optimism about a possible deal with Iran to curb its nuclear program, Trump reversed course last week following Israel’s initial assault that took out several of Iran’s top military officials, making clear that he supported Israel’s campaign while framing it as a consequence for Tehran’s foot-dragging on a potential deal.

The nascent conflict has split Trump’s coalition, dividing GOP hawks and military leaders who’ve long called for a tougher approach to Iran and the “restrainer” wing of his movement, typified by former adviser Steve Bannon, podcaster Ben Shapiro and former Fox News Channel host Tucker Carlson.

Trump, when asked by a reporter about Carlson’s comments criticizing him for supporting Israel’s escalating campaign against Iran, scoffed and suggested he “go get a television network and say it so people listen.”

Hours later, some 33 minutes after his dire warning about evacuating Tehran, the president posted again, making clear the former cable news personality was still on his mind.

He wrote: “Somebody please explain to kooky Tucker Carlson that, ‘IRAN CAN NOT HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON!’”

From Page 17 G7 2005 Summit

minerals supply chains.

- \$22.5 million to accelerate the development and use of quantum technologies.

- Up to \$544 million in guarantees for new development financing in Latin America and the Caribbean.

While our threats cross borders, so do our partnerships and opportunities. In these areas of common interest, Canada is leading G7 co-operation to deliver stability, security, and prosperity.

Quote

“In Kananaskis, Canada’s Presidency showed that we’re ready to create new international partnerships, deepen alliances, and lead member nations into a new era of global co-operation. Canada has the resources the world wants and the values to which others aspire. Canada is meeting this moment with purpose and strength.”

— The Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada

STM maintenance workers resume strike for two more days

By The Canadian Press June 16, 2025

After a pause for the Formula 1 Grand Prix weekend, maintenance workers at the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) are resuming their strike for two more days.

On Monday and Tuesday, bus and Metro services will run during the morning and afternoon rush hours, as well as late in the evening.

Outside these times, service will be reduced to 50 per cent.

The strike by the 2,400 STM maintenance workers began last Monday.

During the first phase of the strike, there was no service outside of essential hours, causing headaches for public transport users.

The strike was suspended for the Grand Prix weekend, with safety concerns cited as the reason for the pause due to the large number of people expected to travel to Île Notre-Dame for the event.

The nine-day strike by the Fédération des employé(e)s des services publics union, affiliated with the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), is scheduled to end on Tuesday at

10 p.m.

The first mediation meeting between STM management and the maintenance workers’ union is scheduled to take place on Monday.

Last Friday, the mediator appointed by Quebec met separately with STM management and the union to familiarize himself with the case and each

party’s position.

Outsourcing is currently one of the main points of contention.

Stuck with a tight budget, the STM says it needs flexibility.

Meanwhile, the union argues it is fighting against the privatization of certain services and for the preservation of public service jobs. #



STM maintenance workers on the picket line outside the Fullum bus maintenance depot on Monday, June 9, 2025. Their union warns that if the STM’s offers are unsatisfactory, another strike could happen “in the coming weeks.” Pierre Obendrauf Montreal Gazette



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Presentation of proficiency certificates in French 1 and 2, Sunday
Class, February 2019. These students also reached Levels 3, and
some took level 4. Levels 1 and 2 are beginners, 3 and 4
intermediate, 5 and 6 are advance levels. Written French is
recommended after successfully completing Level 6, Advance
French. (See Page 11 for programs, courses and services).



PAB graduates pose with their instructors, from left to right: Ethel Tugna,
Sophie Toledo, Annabel Allosa, Edith Fedalizo & Guianne Signey.

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Learning French at 70 does come
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- Slower-paced lessons: As we age, our
learning speed may naturally slow down
a bit. This is why older adults may
benefit from a slower, more deliberate
learning pace, with plenty of time for
repetition, review, and practice. Instead
of rushing through lessons, take the time
to absorb each new concept fully.
- Focus on spoken language: Since the
primary goal for most older learners is to
engage in conversation, it makes sense
to prioritize listening and speaking skills
over grammar exercises or written work.
Practical, real-life application is what will
help you the most in French-speaking
environments.
- Practical application: Incorporating
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lessons helps solidify language skills in
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DE LA PART DE VOS DÉPUTÉS FÉDÉRAUX LIBÉRAUX

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FROM YOUR FEDERAL LIBERAL MPs



ANJU DHILLON

DÉPUTÉE / MP
Dorval – Lachime – LaSalle
Anju.Dhillon@parl.gc.ca
(514) 639-4497



FAYÇAL EL-KHOURY

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



HON. STEVEN GUILBEAULT

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Laurier – Sainte-Marie
Steven.Guilbeault@parl.gc.ca
(514) 522-1339



ANTHONY HOUSEFATHER

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Mont-Royal / Mount Royal
Anthony.Housefather@parl.gc.ca
(514) 283-0171



HON. MÉLANIE JOLY

DÉPUTÉE / MP
Ahuntsic-Cartierville
Melanie.Joly@parl.gc.ca
(514) 383-3709



NATILIEN JOSEPH

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Longueuil – Saint-Hubert
Natilien.Joseph@parl.gc.ca
(450) 928-4778



ANNIE KOUTRAKIS

DÉPUTÉE / MP
Vimy
Annie.Koutrakis@parl.gc.ca
(450) 973-5660



EMMANUELLA LAMBROPOULOS

DÉPUTÉE / MP
Saint-Laurent
Emmanuella.Lambropoulos@parl.gc.ca
(514) 335-6655



PATRICIA LATTANZIO

DÉPUTÉE / MP
Saint-Léonard – Saint-Michel
Patricia.Lattanzio@parl.gc.ca
(514) 256-4548



CARLOS LEITÃO

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Marc-Aurèle-Fortin
Carlos.Leitao@parl.gc.ca
(450) 622-8858



MARIE-GABRIELLE MENARD

DÉPUTÉE / MP
Rochelaga – Rosemont-Est
Marie.Gabrielle.Menard@parl.gc.ca
(514) 201-8608



BIENVENU-OLIVIER NTUMBA

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Mont-Saint-Bruno – L'Acadie
Bienvendu-Olivier.Ntumba@parl.gc.ca
(450) 922-7900



ABDELHAQ SARI

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Bourassa
Abdelhaq.Sari@parl.gc.ca
(514) 323-0980



ERIC ST-PIERRE

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Honoré-Mercier
Eric.St-Pierre@parl.gc.ca
(514) 353-5882



SAMEER ZUBERI

DÉPUTÉ / MP
Pierrefonds – Dollard
Sameer.Zuberi@parl.gc.ca
(514) 624-5725