

Filipino Solidarity Coop moves



Noli Bade took the time to assist movers in putting furniture and equipment into a van during the moving of the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative, January 31, 2010.

Montreal, January 31, 2010 - The Filipino Solidarity Cooperative has moved to a temporary location to save on the rent and to reduce its losses. Its lease which was supposed to expire on April 30, 2010 was cancelled and a new tenant immediately moved into the vacated space starting February 1, 2010. The Coop leased its new premises in the basement apartment of

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Cardinal Turcotte to Consecrate the Filipino Catholic Mission Church

By Hilda Tan Veloso

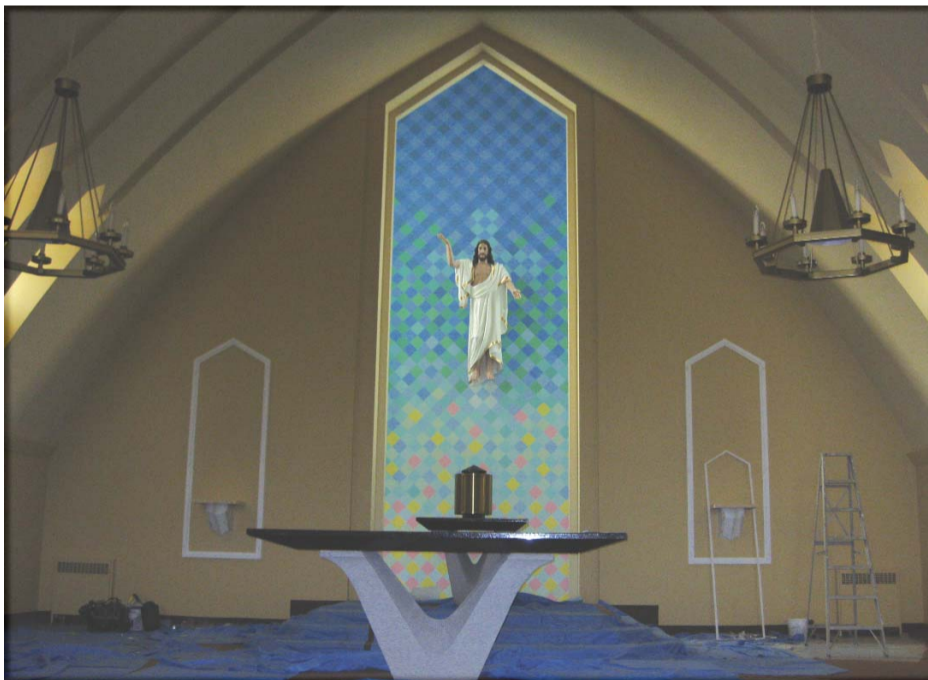


Photo shows the newly renovated altar

His Eminence Jean Claude Cardinal Turcotte, archbishop of the archdiocese of Montreal, will preside at the Celebration of Thanksgiving and Liturgy of Dedication at 2:00 PM on Saturday, February 27, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the canonical installation of Notre Dame des Philippines Catholic Mission, and will bless and consecrate the church. Protocol requires that the blessing and consecration are only performed when the property is fully paid. The purchase of St-Thomas the Apostle church was finalized on October 22, 2006.

The Filipino Catholic Mission bought the St. Thomas the Apostle Church at 8500 boulevard St Laurent with the financial help from the Catholic archdiocese of Montreal. The

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EDITORIAL

Why do we need to hold the Olympics?

The Winter Olympics in Vancouver focuses on Canada as a good place to be. The beautiful mountains, lakes and rivers are just wonderful to behold. However, the demonstrations against the Olympics which occurred before the opening ceremonies have called our attention to the problem of poverty. Even though Canada is known to be one of the developed countries in the world, there are also poor people who live here. This protest calls to mind the issues about hosting the Olympics, and the question of whether or not it is a good idea to hold it at all.

Many argue that the huge cost of hosting the Olympic games means that cities are left with crippling bills and empty stadia once those 17 days are over. Montreal, the host in 1976, is still paying off today the cost of staging the games and the Athens Olympics of 2004 ran billions of euros over the original budget - at state expense. The scandal surrounding the bidding process for the Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Games revealed that 13 of the 124 International Olympic Committee (IOC) members who were tasked with deciding who should be awarded the games were 'bought' with gifts and bribes. Since then the IOC has tightened up its regulations but rumours of corruption amongst some members remain and were revealed by a BBC sting operation in 2004. While proponents of hosting the games generally accept that they will inevitably cost significant amounts of money, they argue that the 'feel good factor' and longer term benefits justify this outlay. Is the Olympics worth its weight in gold? There are many reasons to think so.

The recent protests by hundreds of people in Vancouver show how we can be led to argue from a purely materialistic point of view. The claim that the funds used to host the games could go to a more worthy cause fails to recognize that not everything can be measured in terms of money alone. There is what we call the intangible that always goes deeper than the material or physical dimension.

The experience of being an observer of Olympic games is not only entertaining but also uplifting. The stories behind the struggle of each athlete to achieve international fame give us an insight into the power of the human spirit and the capacity to endure all kinds of trials. As the Olympic creed states: "The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well." Reflecting on these thoughts

allows us to have deeper insights into the meaning of life and what makes it worthwhile. We also learn not only how to win but how to accept defeat gracefully. The high standards of the Olympics demand from each participant a high degree of self-discipline, passion, pride, courage, and sportsmanship. These are ideals which are desirable to be developed in all of us, men and women, young or old.

Although hosting the Olympics has always caused controversies, it has also promoted community spirit. This is probably due to the sense of pride in one's country and the desire to portray a good image to the world. The event also offers many opportunities to influence world opinion. In this year's Olympics, the decision to go "green" is highlighted. The City of Vancouver would have wanted to promote its status as the "greenest city" by banning bottled water. Even though it was not realized, the fact that the attempt to ban bottled water was made may lead to its ultimate realization later.

Holding the Olympics in different places, and in different continents demonstrates the fact that it is designed to unify the globe. It shows it belongs to all humanity and that its only goal is to promote a friendly competition that can lead to more lasting relationships, especially among the thousands of athletes that participate in the different events.

Besides the intangible values of an Olympic event, we can also have the tangible economic benefits. Lots of money pour into the country and the host city itself. There are a lot of overseas visitors and of course, they go back home and tell their friends about the city and that promotes tourism. It also means more work on infra structures and construction thus creating more jobs. The built facilities are then available for future other uses.

Another important spin off from the Olympics in Vancouver seems to be the development of community unity. Several towns and villages in British Columbia worked together in supporting an athlete, and in making sure that the torch relay that passed through their neighborhoods were celebrated as "once in a lifetime event". It is just an example of the positive effects of the Olympics in rallying all the people behind an extraordinary event in spite of its cost.

Perhaps, it can be finally argued that there is always something good that can be derived from an Olympic event because it promotes excellence, and nurtures the dreams of young people to win the highest honor in their chosen sports. (Z. Ferry-Kharroubi) ■

PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER CONGRATULATES KRISTINA GROVES ON OLYMPIC BRONZE MEDAL

OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper today congratulated Kristina Groves, whose exceptional performance in the ladies' 3,000-metre long track speed skating event was rewarded with a bronze medal at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.



Kristina Groves, speed skater (bronze)

"Canadians are extremely proud to see Kristina Groves standing on the podium in Vancouver," said the Prime Minister. "Congratulations to Kristina for taking home the bronze medal in the ladies' 3,000-metre long track speed skating event."

Ms. Groves was born in Ottawa and resides in Calgary. This is her third medal in her third Olympic Games, having won two silver medals in Turin. She has also won 13 medals at the World Single Distance Championships, and was the 2008 3,000-metre World Champion.

The 2010 Olympic Winter Games are being held from February 12 to 28. Canada will be represented by more than 200 athletes who will compete in a 15-sport competition schedule at nine venues in Vancouver, Richmond and Whistler. More than 5500 athletes, coaches and team officials from 90 countries are participating in these Olympic Games. ■

PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER CONGRATULATES ALEXANDRE BILODEAU ON FIRST OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL

OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper today congratulated Alexandre Bilodeau on winning Canada's first Olympic gold medal at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

"On behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, I would like to congratulate Alexandre Bilodeau for his exceptional accomplishment of becoming the first Canadian athlete to win an Olympic gold medal on Canadian soil," said Prime Minister Harper. "Canada was absolutely thrilled to see this remarkable athlete atop the podium among the world's best. Alexandre Bilodeau will forever be part of



Alexandre Bilodeau, gold medalist

Canada's rich sport history."

Mr. Bilodeau was born in Rosemère, Québec and currently resides in Montréal. This is his first medal in his second Olympic Games. He is the holder of 19 medals and nine top-10 finishes in 40

World Cup appearances. He is also the youngest man to ever win gold in a World Cup event.

"Our athletes' commitment to sports excellence is a tremendous source of national pride," said the Prime Minister. "Each day, they show an unwavering dedication to their sport and to their country. They are important role models for all Canadians and great international ambassadors for the values and spirit that make this nation great."

Prime Minister Harper spoke with Mr. Bilodeau a few moments after Mr. Bilodeau's historic victory. The Prime Minister told Mr. Bilodeau that he had watched the competition with his wife Laureen and their children Ben and Rachel, and that Canadians across the country are proud of his achievement.

PMO Press Office: 613-957-5555 ■

Canadian athletes offer tips for everyday success

(NC)—We all have dreams, no matter how big or small. However, trying to achieve them can sometimes feel like an overwhelming task. That's why it's important to prepare in advance and set goals. Canadian Olympic athletes know first-hand that dreams are not achieved overnight. With years of training, sacrifice and trying to beat the odds, these athletes have learned how to turn dreams into a reality. Five Canadian Olympic hopefuls share what they consider the key ingredients to success:

- There is no "I" in team. Skeleton athlete, Sarah Reid, knows all about the importance of team work. "Although skeleton is an individual sport, success is never found without the help of a team. Two heads are better than one, and three heads are better than two. My teammates and I are all working towards the same goal, and each one of us brings something unique to the sport and the team. Similarly, loved ones can also be a part of your own personal 'team', and can provide a unique support. Family and friends can be there for an outside perspective or to offer insight or advice. Don't be afraid to acknowledge your weaknesses and ask for help! Your weakness may be another person's strength!"

- Have a support system. Biathlon athlete, Megan Imrie, and bobsledder, Jenny Ciochetti, know the importance of a good support system. "A strong support system helps keep you grounded and reminds you that you're loved no matter what you are doing or whether or not you're successful," says Ciochetti. "Competing at the 2010 Winter Games on Canadian soil would be an exciting accomplishment but could also be unnerving," says Imrie. "Thanks to the Petro-Canada Canadian Athlete Family Program, which will host approximately 500 immediate family members of Canadian athletes competing in Vancouver, my family will have the opportunity to cheer me on. My family will be completely taken care of — everything from accommodations, meals, transportation and even event tickets. There is nothing better than knowing my family will be there."

- Use your imagination. Warren Shouldice, a freestyle aerialist, often visualizes himself achieving his dream — winning gold for Canada. "Before any big competition, I imagine myself executing a perfect jump and then standing on the podium in first place. I focus on the positives and all the hard work that has prepared me to be the best I can be. I find that using my mental fitness this way allows me to overcome whatever challenges I face. No matter what your goal is in life, visualize yourself

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COOPERATIVE NEWS

A fair turn out at the Post New Year and Pre-Valentine Party is a good start

If there were no other parties being held on February 6, there would have been more people who could have attended the pot luck supper organized by the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative. Nevertheless, the attendance was better than previous ones. The food brought in by both members and guests were plenty and delicious. It was also a great opportunity to meet and talk to community leaders and members, to explain to them the needs of the Coop and how they can help. The new business model that the Coop will adopt was explained. To compensate for the temporary location which is not on the commercial zone, the Coop will concentrate on personal and telephone campaign to encourage members to buy from their own cooperative store. Some people started placing an order, led by Dr. Gene Santander, Linda Corpuz, and Amy Manon-og while others promised to send in their orders later for pick up.

The following were the people who took the time to participate in the party: Angie Ogerio, Julie Parado, Alex and Nely Sy, Salve and Abel Desprez, Bert Abiera, Sophie Toledo, Amy and Gildo Manon-og, Patria Allego, Jess Perucho, Danius Sabadao, Nena Tacio, Jojie Perez, Rosalinda Perez, Riza Esmeralda, Peter Araneta, Tess Tesalona, Evelyn Calugay, Letty Locquiao, Winnie Felipe, Remy Monteagudo, Ryan Alipato, Joecel Soriano, Dominador Maneja, Susana Pascual, Jessie Pascual, Estrella Gascon, Becky Baluyot, Marcy Celebrados, Au Osdon, Salve and Abel Desprez, Hilda Veloso, Dr. Gene Santander, and Linda Corpuz. Flor and Rose Rillo came early but had to leave for another meeting.

We thank all the members and guests who came and hope that they will continue to be present in future events to be organized by the Coop.

See you all next time. ■



The new location of the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative is in the basement of this duplex (on the right) 4151-A Van Horne Avenue (close to the corner of Lavoie)



Filipino Solidarity Cooperative Inc.
4151-A Van Horne Avenue
(between Lavoie & Legare)
Montreal H3S 1S2, QC
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E-Mail filipiocoop@gmail.com

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Dante Llacer with his assistant and a volunteer, Noli Bade, moving furniture for the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative, January 31, 2010, to its new location.

The Filipino Solidarity Cooperative

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2:30 P.M.

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a member, not too far from its former location. The new address is 4151-A Van Horne, the 5th duplex building from the corner of Lavoie street. The lease is only for 6 months for it is just a temporary measure until the Coop recovers financially. It will engage in more active telephone campaign to encourage members to place orders by phone for pick up or delivery on Tuesdays and Sundays. The Coop will open Monday to Wednesday - 2:00 to 5:00 P.M., Thursday-Friday- 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. and from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. If more members volunteer to work at the Coop, then it will be kept open longer. Customers may request for any stock they want by allowing 72 hours before they pick up their orders so that the Coop can search for any item missing from stock by working closely with local suppliers. The Coop's telephone number is the same as before - 514-733-8915 and is



The old store place is almost empty but there are still a lot of stuff to be moved. Shelves were removed and transported by another mover the following day.

now equipped with a voice mail. As soon as we have organized the new place, we will invite members and prospective members to an open house. Perhaps, by this time, Ben Bade, one of the founders of the Coop, has completely recovered from an illness.

In order to explain the role of cooperatives in the economic development of the community, a free seminar hosted by Gilmore International College will be launched, starting on March 21, 2010 at 2:30 p.m. It was previously scheduled for Saturday February 20 but from the responses, it would seem that many people are too busy on Saturday because of numerous parties. Please call 514-485-7861 to reserve your space. The seminar will be held at the office of Gilmore College on 5450 Cote des Neiges, Suite 511.

Meanwhile, the management team of the Coop will look into finding a store front location in the heart of the community in Cote des Neiges. In order to afford the rent for a premium location, a business partner will be recruited to use half of the space. The possibility of allowing local merchants

or members who want to sell their products through the Coop will also be another way of reducing the overhead cost as they can be asked to pay for the space occupied.

Although the current directors' term will expire soon, there is still a need to fill up the vacancies left by two directors who resigned due to personal reasons. It is imperative to have a more functional board in order to help the Cooperative resolve its delicate situation. Ideally, members who are Canadian citizens, and who possess business skills, retired and willing to serve the community, will certainly get the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative quickly out of its financial crisis. On the other hand, there is hope to make the Cooperative work if at least 100 members out of the 700 will buy their weekly groceries of \$50 or more. Committed members who are volunteering their time will be calling people to remind them about the Coop which needs their support. Needless to say, a cooperative is only successful if

all members patronize it. but it appears that they have not yet fully grasped the importance of member participation and it is hoped that by calling them, they may be reminded about their obligations to patronize their own cooperative store.

Those who live outside of Cote des Neiges can benefit from the phone order system as they can save time by placing their orders for pick up. Instead of spending one hour shopping, they can shop in 10 minutes and can avoid long line ups in more popular stores

The financial reports for 2008 and 2009 will be simultaneously prepared for presentation to the members during our 4th general assembly to be scheduled within a few weeks. The date will be announced in the next issue of the North American Filipino Star.

Please check the Coop's website: filipinosolidaritycooperativeinc.shutterfly.com

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From Page 1

FCMM

loan has been fully paid. The funds used for the recent renovations to the interior of the church were taken from proceeds of the activities, and also from contributions of donors and benefactors. The Mission gratefully acknowledges the help and wish to sincerely thank everyone.

The celebration will continue in the evening with a gala reception at 6:00 PM at the Wyndham Montreal Airport Hotel featuring live music by the Black Smith Band, a cultural presentation by the Pamana ng Luzviminda Dance Troupe and a special Rigodon de Honor Dance by some FCMM members to be choreographed by Mimi Noche-Tamayo. Everyone is invited to attend the celebration, and those interested should contact the Filipino Catholic Mission at (514) 387-5292.

The Filipino Catholic Mission was canonically installed by the late Paul Cardinal Grégoire on December 10, 1989 at the Notre Dame des Neiges Church after representation by Monsignor Mario Paquette, the Episcopal Vicar for Ethnic Community at the time; and through the efforts of its first pastor, Fr. Carmelo Gosioco, who worked hard to make the canonical installation a reality. The Mission adopted the motto: "Per Aspera Ad Astra". (Through the hardships of the Cross with Mary and to the stars to share the glory of the Lord.) The Filipino Catholic Mission is non-territorial and ministers to the spiritual and religious needs of Filipino Catholics in Montreal and the suburbs.

The establishment of the Mission brought the best in Filipinos-pride, patience, service and devotion and loyalty to their church, which define the Filipino identity. Through thick and thin, present and past members have remained loyal and deserve praise and recognition. They are the jewels of the Catholic Mission; without them, the church will remain an empty edifice and meaningless.

For years, the Mission used the facilities of Notre Dame des Neiges church on Cote des Neiges for liturgical services but moved out on July 25, 1999 and relocated to St. Denis for its first Mass on August 2, 1999. The Mission moved to St Thomas the Apostle on boulevard St. Laurent when it purchased the property.

The dream to have a Filipino priest with its own church was first presented in the early 70's to Fr. Mario Paquette, but the idea was shelved temporarily because it involved financial obligations and the community was not ready for it. It was not until 1987, when, Fr. Carmelo Gosioco appeared on the scene with recommendation of the Philippine Episcopal Commission, and whose ecclesiastical appointment as Mission Chaplain was approved by the late Paul Cardinal Gregoire late that year, that the idea of a Filipino Catholic Mission had started to unfold.

Under Fr. Francisco Alvarez, P.M.E., the Mission has continued to progress and expand in its various endeavours to build a genuine Christian community characterized by family spirit, selfless service, prayer, faith growth and committed dedication to personal and communal responsibilities.

Elected administrators help Fr. Alvarez run the Mission and they also provide for the financial and temporal needs through various fund-generating

activities.

The Pastoral Council, through its various ministries, renders services for the pastoral concerns of the members. The Council is composed of Worship, Eucharistic, Ministry of Praise, Evangelization, Family Life, Youth, and Catechetical, Care of the Sick, Legion of Mary, Knights of Columbus Council, Kawan ng Panginoon, Prayer Groups, MAAC, Parents' Support Group and Secular Franciscans. The Pastoral Council is the over-all coordinating body that oversees the planning and coordination of activities.

The Notre Dame des Philippines Catholic Mission is one of the vibrant faith community in the archdiocese. It is the pride of Filipino Catholics in the Province of Quebec, where, Filipino religious customs and traditions are preserved. All Filipinos and visitors alike are welcome to be members and attend its inspiring liturgy.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary, the Notre Dame des Philippines Catholic Mission wishes to thank all the parishioners, friends, donors and benefactors for their loyalty and unswerving support; and our profound thanks and gratitude to the Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal for their pastoral concern and financial help, without which, the dream of having a church of our own would have been in vain. Ad Multos Annos!

Not just a Nobel cause

(NC)—Betty Nobel has it all. Her life includes a thriving career at Vancouver Community College, a busy family with two children and two grandchildren, and a lifelong devotion to learning and volunteerism.

Reading is at the core of these activities. However, without government funding for accessible library services, Nobel - who is blind - could find the future much more difficult.

To ensure Betty can continue to enjoy her right to read, CNIB is calling on all Canadians to visit www.cnib.ca/righttoread, where they can join a campaign urging the government to fund library services for people with vision loss. (NC) "I have a right to a good library service just as any Canadian does," says Nobel, who relies on the charitably-funded CNIB Library in almost every aspect of life.

In the mornings, Betty chooses local and international newspaper stories to be read aloud digitally through the CNIB Library digital portal, discussing them with her husband over coffee before catching the bus to work. There, she relies on a combination of braille books, electronic texts and digital audio formats - from the CNIB Library - to conduct her classes. On the way home, she often listens to a book chosen by her book club.

Many evenings are spent reading to her grandchildren with special printbraille books borrowed from the library - Betty reads from a braille overlay in the book, while her grandchild follows along.

Its Betty's hope the federal government and all the provinces will help CNIB keep blind and partially sighted Canadians reading.

www.newscanada.com ■

Group alarmed over rise in number of prostituted OFWs

By Dennis Carcamo (philstar.com)
Updated February 01, 2010 02:13 PM

MANILA, Philippines – There has been a rise in the number of overseas Filipino workers who end up in brothels and work as prostitutes in the Middle East, an official of a migrant workers' group disclosed today.

John Leonard Monterona, Migrante-Middle East regional coordinator, said OFWs who become sex workers usually are found in "open" Middle Eastern countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar.

"This is very disturbing — receiving complaints direct from the victims themselves that they have been victims of prostitution by their supposed 'sponsors' who have provided them tourist visa, only to discover later that they have been sold to 'customers' who are hungry of the victim's flesh," Monterona said.

The so-called sponsors or "pimps" of these OFWs usually help them with their travel requirements, such as visa and passports.

Monterona said the pimp will then call and offer customers for the OFW's "services" in exchange for 300 to 500 dinars.

SC to AFP: Present 43 health workers

By Norman Bordadora, Jocelyn Uy
Philippine Daily Inquirer

THE SUPREME COURT on Thursday ordered the military and police to present Friday to the Court of Appeals the 43 health workers arrested on Feb. 6 in Morong, Rizal.

The high court's First Division issued the resolution in response to the petition for a writ of habeas corpus filed on Monday by the relatives and colleagues of the health workers, who were taken at gunpoint from a health training seminar and detained at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

The hearing, scheduled at 2:30 p.m., is to be conducted by the appellate court's First Division led by acting Presiding Justice Portia Hormachuelos.

The health workers were arrested for suspected links with the communist New People's Army (NPA). The military and police held a press conference yesterday in Taytay, Rizal, to back this suspicion.

The Supreme Court directed the Court of Appeals to provide an appropriate venue in view of the big number of persons to be presented.

It also required the respondent officers led by Gen. Victor Ibrado, the Armed Forces chief of staff, and Director General Jesus Verzosa of the Philippine National Police to explain the detention of the health workers.

"The court finds that the requisites for the application of the writ are present," the tribunal's First Division said in its resolution.

"The petition was signed and verified by relatives and the secretary of the Community Medicine Development Foundation on behalf of the 43 who are restrained of their

liberty," it added.

Among the arrested health workers detained at Camp Capinpin are two doctors—Alex Montes and Merry Mia Clamor.

'Ka Beloy'

In the press conference at Camp Geronimo in Taytay, a man claiming to be an NPA member in Bulacan said he and the 42 others arrested in Morong were part of the guerrilla movement, and a police officer identified two of them as among the rebels who abducted and held him hostage for almost three months in 2009.

Valentino Paulino-or "Ka Beloy," as he introduced himself—and Insp. Rex Cuntapay were among the witnesses presented by the military and police to justify the detention of the 43 health workers arrested on Feb. 6.

"My comrades are still detained in the camp ... so I would like to ask your assistance to help them return to the fold of the law," Paulino told reporters.

Cuntapay said he and his team were ambushed at noon on Jan. 3, 2009, in Barangay Macabud, Rodriguez town, by a group of NPA rebels, killing PO1 Erickson Aquino.

Among the arrested health workers, he pinpointed two women—Linda Otañez and Pearl Irene Martinez—as part of the NPA group that held him captive for 83 days.

"Our patrol vehicle ran over a land mine last year... Our driver was killed, two others were seriously wounded," Cuntapay said.

He said Police Officers 1 Alberto dela Cruz and Marvin Agasen were also held hostage for nearly three months.

Police personnel assigned to the municipal station in San Narciso in the Bondoc Peninsula also took turns in naming the purported guerrillas who posed as journalists before raiding the police post on Dec. 20, 2009.

Among those identified were Otanez, Aldrin Garcia, Edwin Detera, Antonio de Dios, Reynaldo Macabenta and Mark Escartin.

'Concoctions'

Relatives and colleagues said the 43 arrested health workers were tortured and kept in handcuffs and blindfolds for more than 36 hours at Camp Capinpin.

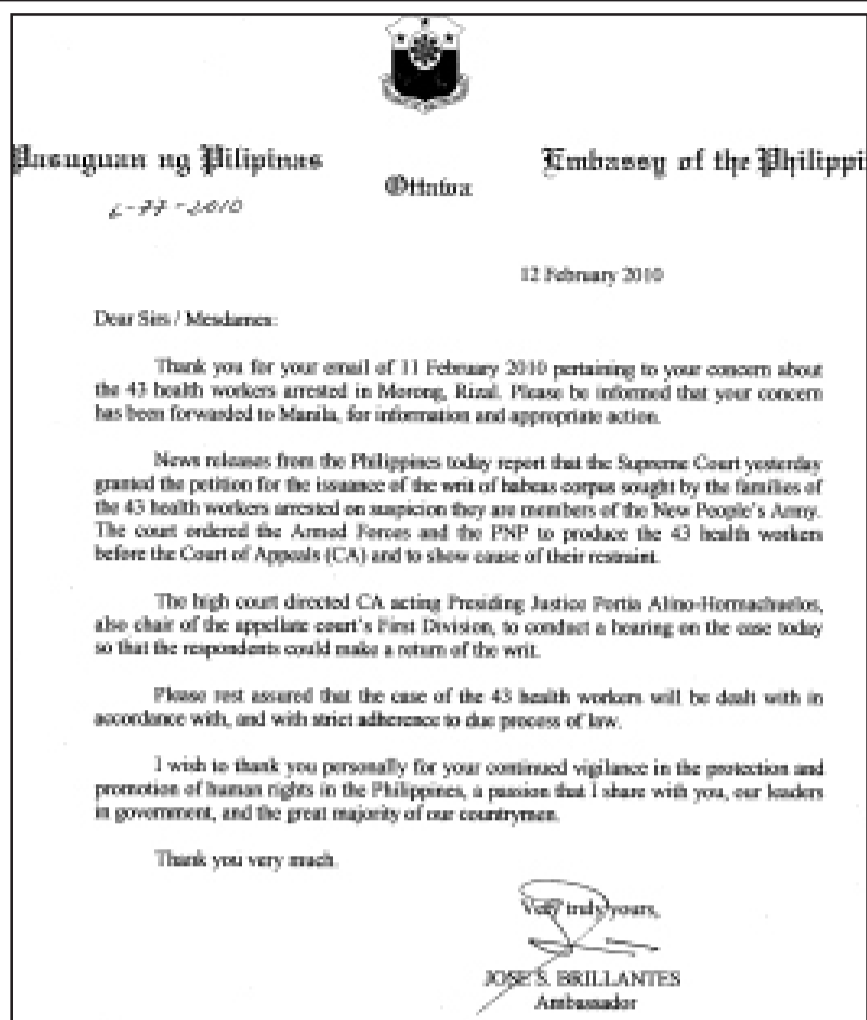
Maj. Gen. Jorge Segovia, chief of the 2nd Infantry Division, told reporters that these claims were "the first salvo of propaganda" meant to discredit the Feb. 6 operation.

He said it was expected that the NPA would not "take it sitting down" as it was the biggest arrest of communist guerrillas by security forces in recent history.

"This is a big blow to them, so they will concoct every kind of story," Segovia said.

A joint team from the military and police arrested the 43 health workers during a raid on a rest house owned by Dr. Melecia Velmonte, an expert in infectious diseases, in Morong.

The raiding team claimed to find a number of firearms and explosives in the rest house.



Seven criminal cases were yesterday filed in court against the 43, State Prosecutor Romeo Senson said.

Senson said 40 were charged with illegal possession of explosives with no bail recommended.

He said the rest, who purportedly acted as guards, were slapped with bailable charges of violation of the gun ban imposed by the Commission on Elections, and illegal possession of firearms.

As for Velmonte, Senson surmised that the doctor was outside her rest house when the arrests were made, which was why she could not be charged with any of the three crimes.

"Although, of course, that is still under investigation," he said.

Detained Workers Cry Torture

(Manila Times by Frank Lloyd Tiongson, Feb. 11, 2010) Detained health workers suffered various forms of torture at the hands of the military to force them to admit they are members of the New People's Army (NPA), it was revealed Monday.

"Based on accounts by the detainees, the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] has subjected them [health workers] to various forms of torture and sexual harassment," said

Dr. Geneve Rivera, secretary

general of the Health Alliance for Democracy. Rivera was accompanied by Human Rights Chairman Leila de Lima, who visited the detainees on Monday.

The 43 health workers, detained since Saturday at Camp Capinpin in Rizal, were arrested while conducting a training-seminar at a resort in Morong, Rizal based on suspicions that they were members of the NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

According to the detainees, they were handcuffed and blindfolded for more than 36 hours after being forcibly brought to Camp Capinpin, headquarters of the 202nd Infantry Brigade. They were also allegedly denied food and even bathroom privileges.

"They were not allowed to go to the bathrooms on their own, and their custodians were the ones who removed their underwear every time they had to urinate," added Rivera.

"A female health worker complained that a female custodian was even the one who washed her genitals after she used the bathroom," she added.

According to accounts of their relatives, the detainees were subjected

See Page 8 Detained Workers

LOOKING FOR A FILIPINA FOR SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP AND MARRIAGE



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Noynoy regains lead over Villar in new survey



Sen. Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III has regained the lead over Sen. Manuel Villar in the latest presidential survey conducted January 28-February 3 by Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS).

According to the TNS survey

obtained by ABS-CBN News' Ces Oreña Drilon, Aquino was chosen by 41.54% of 3,000 respondents while Villar was picked by 30.63%.

TNS is a global market research firm with an office in the Philippines.

Aquino and Villar were statistically

tied in a Pulse Asia survey conducted from January 22 -26, or around a week before the TNS survey, with the LP bet garnering 37% and the NP standard-bearer getting 35%. (Read: Aquino, Villar tied in Pulse Asia survey)

Third in the Jan. 28-Feb. 3 TNS survey was former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada of the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) with 11.66%, statistically the same as in the last Pulse Asia survey where he got 12%.

Administration candidate Gilbert Teodoro of the Lakas-Kampi-CMD was fourth with 5.21%, the same as in the last Pulse Asia survey.

Bro. Eddie Villaneuva got 2%, Senator Richard Gordon got 1.7%, Senator Jamby Madrigal got 0.22%, also statistically the same as what they received in the January 22 to 26 Pulse Asia survey.

Villar ethics case as factor

The TNS survey was done around a week after a heated controversy over Villar's ethics case erupted in the Senate, which could be one reason for the changes in the ratings of the two leading presidential candidates.

The Senate committee of the whole's report accusing Villar of unethical conduct in connection with the C-5 road extension project was taken up during the plenary on January 25. The committee had ordered him to return over P6 billion in government funds that were allegedly wasted for the project. (Read: Senators clash in plenary over Villar ethics case)

On January 26, Senate President Enrile also accused Villar of trying to bribe him to change his stand on the issue. (Read: Enrile claims Villar tried to buy him off)

The Senate, however, failed to act on the report after Villar's supporters failed to show up on the last session day of the 14th Congress.

NP downplays survey results

The TNS survey was apparently commissioned by the Aquino camp.

Asked for his comment, NP spokesman and senatorial bet Gilbert Remulla said the report does not disclose how the questions were phrased and whether they were slanted for or against any candidate ■

Erap vows to make RP a rice-exporting country

Former President Joseph Estrada has assured farmers and environmental groups that if he becomes president again, he would make the Philippines a rice-exporting country.

"I will double rice production in Nueva Ecija by 2013 so that the Philippines will not only be self-sufficient in rice but also be able to export rice," the standard-bearer of the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino told farmers and the thousands of other supporters who greeted him for his campaign sortie through Nueva Ecija.

He added that an Estrada administration in 2010 will see the realization of the Philippines becoming a rice-producing and rice-exporting country.

"Food security through agricultural production is at the top of the Estrada Agenda for 2010," Estrada said.

He will be activating the Agrikulturang Makamasa program again which turned agricultural growth around from negative 6 percent to positive 6 percent in just a little over one year.

Estrada was mobbed in Nueva Ecija by thousands of Novo Ecijanos who continue to support him, recalling that Estrada has been proved to be committed to uplifting the plight of poor farmers.

Estrada, who is running for president, toured Nueva Ecija visiting the towns of Cabiao, Gapan, Talavera, Sta. Rosa and San Isidro with his running mate Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and reelectionist Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

An environmental group, for its part, vowed to support Estrada's candidacy.

"We are supporting President Joseph 'Erap' Estrada because if he is president we can be sure that our farmers and our rural lands will be

taken care of. We can be sure that our fields will be free from drought," the Philippine Green Republic Party (PGRP) said.

PGRP is an environmental organization based in Nueva Ecija that boasts of a strong following of multi-sectoral groups particularly in the Central Luzon area. It is also a

rice importer," GRP leader Fel Pajarillo, in a statement, said.

"The other presidential candidates cannot do anything for agriculture," Pajarillo said, recounting the Hacienda Luisita case of presidential candidate Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino and the complaints made this week by farmers in Bulacan that presidential



Former President Joseph Estrada delivers his message to his supporters during his proclamation rally at the start of the election campaign, Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010 in Manila

member of Global Greens, a worldwide network of parties with a strong environmental agenda.

PGRP decided to support Estrada because of his agenda of making agricultural development his government's top priority.

"Nueva Ecija is the country's top producer of rice. We know that President Estrada can make our farm output three times better with his agricultural policies and make our country a rice exporter instead of a

candidate Sen. Manny Villar used their land to secure a loan with dubious documents.

"Only Erap has a strong and sincere agenda to uplift the plight of Filipino farmers nationwide."

Meanwhile, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said neither of the two frontrunners in the presidential race this year can lay claim on Iloilo province, which commands the most number of votes among the so-called Panay Islands.

Nacionalista Party (NP) standard-bearer Villar boasts of his Ilonggo roots, while Liberal Party's (LP) presidential bet Sen. Benigno Aquino has the full backing of his party stalwarts who come the province such as former Sen. Franklin Drilon and vice presidential candidate Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II who is from the nearby Capiz.

Santiago noted that their inability to speak the native tongue could be a liability for them.

Iloilo province, like most highly-urbanized areas, has always been on the side of the political opposition.

"In this case there will be a very strong sense of 'Cory' (the late President Corazon Aquino) sympathy but then again if you juxtaposed that to the fact that Villar himself comes from an Ilonggo father, they might become even and none of the other candidates in the other political parties speak Ilonggo. That's their problem. It's very hard to claim to be an Ilonggo and not be able to speak the dialect," the senator pointed out.

Senator Aquino, for his part, vowed to give attention to public healthcare system and provide everyone access to Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) cards and its services.

"We will go beyond ensuring that each Filipino has a PhilHealth card. Universal Health Care should mean that every PhilHealth cardholder will get not merely the card; but more important, the essential health services, basic medicines and appropriate quality health cards," Aquino told 3,000 doctors at the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) Universal Health Care Forum at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pasay City. ■

Not all Cory, Ninoy-lovers will vote for Noynoy



Not all Filipinos who chose the late couple Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. and Corazon Aquino as their most beloved leader will vote for their son, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, according to a Pulse Asia survey disclosed two days before Valentine's Day.

Pulse Asia asked 1,800 respondents in its January 22-26, 2010 survey if they have ever loved a Filipino leader or politician, living or deceased, and 52% responded yes.

Of the 52% who said they have loved a leader or politician, the most loved politician or leader was Mrs. Aquino, with 35% or around one in every 3 respondents naming her.

Not so loyal for Noynoy?

However, not all those who have loved the late President would choose her son, Noynoy, for president.

Out of the 35% who picked Cory as their most loved leader, 50% or 1 in every 2 respondents said they would choose Noynoy for president.

Surprisingly, 33% or one in every 3 respondents of those who have loved Cory said they would vote for Noynoy's closest rival, Sen. Manny Villar, for president.

This data could be one reason for the dissipation of the so-called "Cory magic" which catapulted Noynoy as the most preferred presidential candidate in the months following his mother's death from cancer on August 1, 2009. (Read: Cory magic wearing off on Noynoy?)

While the Aquino camp believes that they have a 40% loyal base of supporters, it would appear from the latest presidential survey that they're not that loyal after all.

With 90% of voters poor, Villar's pro-poor marketing pitch and rags-to-riches tale, backed by huge spending on political ads, appears to have weakened support for Noynoy. (Read: Noynoy losing support of masses, surveys show)

Aquino and Villar were already in a statistical tie for most preferred presidential candidate in the January

22-26 survey of Pulse Asia, with 37% choosing Aquino and 35% picking Villar. (Read: Aquino, Villar tied in Pulse Asia survey)

Many Marcos-lovers go for Villar Tied for second most-loved Filipino politician/leader were the late President Ferdinand Marcos and ex-President Joseph Estrada.

Out of the 14.8% who have loved Marcos, a plurality of 42% said they would choose Villar for president, while 22% would choose Noynoy.

Out of the 12.8% who have loved Estrada, a plurality of 46% said they would choose him for president again in May 2010. Villar came second among Estrada-lovers with 29% while Noynoy was third with 19%.

Many Ninoy-, Magsaysay-lovers will vote for Noynoy

The fourth most-loved Filipino politician/leader was Noynoy's father, Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino Jr., who was assassinated on August 21, 1983.

Out of the 8.4% who have loved Ninoy, a big majority of 65% said they would vote for his son, Noynoy. Among the Ninoy-lovers, Villar was second with 22%.

The late President Ramon Magsaysay was tied with Ninoy with 6.6% saying they have loved him. Out of the 6.6%, a plurality of 47% said they would vote for Noynoy; 17% would vote for Villar.

'Villar loyalists'

Villar was 5th among the most loved Filipino politicians or leaders.

Although only 4.9% said they have loved Villar, 92% or 9 out of every 10 of them said they would vote for Villar. Noynoy was next with 3%.

"Senator Villar appears to enjoy the most reliable electoral capital among those seeing him as their most beloved political leader," Pulse Asia said.

Out of the 2% who have loved President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, 58% or around 6 out of every 10 of them would vote for Villar, 17% would go for Noynoy, and only 15% for her

official candidate, Gilbert Teodoro.

Faithful Bro. Eddie followers Noynoy, Brother Eddie Villanueva, Sen. Richard Gordon and Lakas-Kampi-CMD standard-bearer Gilbert Teodoro were voted by a small fraction of respondents as their most beloved political leader.

Of the 4 presidential bets, only Villanueva has faithful followers with all respondents who chose him as their most beloved saying they will vote for him.

Majority of Noynoy lovers, meanwhile, said will vote for Villanueva (89%).

The Pulse Asia said the survey's result shows that "...love for a Filipino national leader or politician understandably influences the country's voters; however, as a critical political resource, love also appears to reflect fickleness in some specific cases."

The running mates of Villar and Noynoy -- Senators Loren Legarda and Mar Roxas, respectively -- were both chosen by 0.6% of those who said they have a loved political leader.

The survey showed that 53% of Legarda-lovers would choose Noynoy for president while 47% would pick Villar.

Many of Roxas-lovers said they will go for Villar (48%), and only 39% said they will vote for Noynoy. ■

Aquino relents, admits Cory Constitution needs changes

Liberal Party presidential candidate Benigno Aquino III on Monday vowed to create a commission to study constitutional amendments within his first 100 days if he is elected president, saying safeguards need to be built into the Constitution that his mother, former President Cory Aquino, helped draft.

"Safeguards deemed adequate seem wanting in the midst of an adventurous President who continuously pushes the envelope with regard to the law," Aquino told Standard Today.

He cited President Arroyo's use of Executive Order 464, which kept Cabinet members from testifying before congressional investigations on allegations of high-level government corruption.

He also cited Mrs. Arroyo's efforts to appoint the next chief justice—even if the vacancy in the position fell within an election-period ban.

"I am going to set up a commission to determine the need for a change in the Constitution, and if there is a public clamor for it," Aquino said.

Asked why his commission would succeed where others had failed, Aquino said he would give the issue priority at

See Page 17 AQUINO

More ELECTION NEWS P.17




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COMMUNITY NEWS

Scouts Canada hosts Citizenship Ceremony at Laval City Hall

Montreal, Quebec - February 11, 2010 - As part of International Scout/Guide Week, Scouts Canada in cooperation with Citizenship and Immigration Canada will host a citizenship ceremony at City Hall in Laval. Twenty-seven new Canadians will receive their citizenship in the presence of family and friends at this event, taking place February 25th 2010 at 7pm.

Scouts Canada is honoured to welcome these new Canadians to our country and to invite them to join our organization. Many new arrivals have fond memories of participating in the Scouts in their former countries. This event will let them become familiar with the Scouting movement in Canada, and be an opportunity for their children to get involved in an activity in their new community. Scouts Canada is an inclusive organization that has members from all ethnic, cultural and religious communities. The organization provides opportunities for youth and adults to become engaged citizens within their communities, all while having fun and adventure in the outdoors.

Please join us on February 25th 2010 at 7 pm for this important ceremony. Laval City Hall is located at 1 Place du souvenir, Laval, Quebec. Young scouts and their leaders will be present to give a Scouting demonstration.

Scouts Canada, the country's leading youth organization, offers fun and exciting programs and adventure for boys, girls and youth ages 5 to 26. Scouting teaches youth about the active role they can play in helping to create a better world. 100,000 members enjoy Scouts Canada's programs, which are provided by caring and dedicated volunteers. We are members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), which has grown to 28 million members in 217 countries and territories.

For further questions or to arrange an interview, contact:

From Page 5 Detained Workers
to hours of interrogation despite their demands for legal counsel.

Confined in dark cells and forced to listen to sounds of gunfire, the detainees were also reportedly forced to admit that they were members of the NPA. Rivera related that they were not allowed to speak to each other and were slapped several times every night.

"One of the detained men already has sore arms and wrists from being tied down for so long," added Rivera. Sixty-year-old Alex Montes was allegedly electrocuted and repeatedly hit on the chest while being questioned. He said the pain was so intense, he was willing to admit to anything to end the punishment.

Various groups have called for the immediate release of the detained

Sterling Lambert (514) 334-3004 ext. 211 or slambert@qc.scouts.ca al, Quebec - February 11, 2010 - As part of International Scout/Guide Week, Scouts Canada in cooperation with Citizenship and Immigration Canada will host a citizenship ceremony at City Hall in Laval. Twenty-seven new Canadians will receive their citizenship in the presence of family and friends at this event, taking place February 25th 2010 at 7pm.

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health workers who, they said, were illegally and arbitrarily arrested.

Health Care Without Harm-Southeast Asia and Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns condemn the harassment and detention of the health workers.

"Unlike other doctors who flew abroad for greener pastures, these doctors and other health workers stayed and chose to serve in the country. As a matter of fact, they are serving the poor communities that are normally beset of health services. The least the military could do is pay them respect and not scare away other health workers," said Merci Ferrer, executive director of Health Care Without Harm, an international coalition of more than 470 organizations in 52 countries, working to transform the healthcare sector



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worldwide.

"The torture inflicted on them goes against all humanitarian law and the AFP once again has shown its wanton disregard for human rights by adding this to its long record of torturing detainees to extract information against their will," Sophia Garduce, spokesman of the Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns, a group of child rights advocates.

Garduce noted that one those detained, Dr. Merry Mia Clamor is a Parent-Teacher Association vice president of the Parents Alternative for Early Childhood Care and Development Inc., a Salinlahi member organization.

The group also raised their concern that two among the 26 female detainees are pregnant and in dire need of healthcare for themselves and their unborn children.

"The pregnant women need maternal healthcare, but with their present condition, we fear for their health and the safety of the unborn fetus," Garduce said. ■

From Page 2 Canadian Athletes

crossing the finish line and what it will take to get there."

• Believe in yourself. Sometimes it takes a few attempts to accomplish a goal. Along the way, there may be disappointments as well as successes, but most importantly you need to believe in yourself. Curler, Brent Laing, knows what it feels like to experience a set-back. "As an athlete, you may experience hurdles that can affect the outcome you're hoping to achieve. Determined not to let these types of challenges hold me back, I continue to believe in myself and keep working towards achieving my goals. Hard work and perseverance can help you reach your dreams."

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Donate wisely

(NC)—Think about the last time you made a charitable donation. Odds are you were approached by a friend, neighbour, or co-worker, and you made a donation based on the amount of cash you had on hand. You probably gave little thought to how the charity would use your money. Next time, why not turn your good intention into a wise move by using the tips below.

Plan your giving

Make charitable donations a part of your budget, and use the Canada Revenue Agency's Charities Listings at www.cra.gc.ca/donors to find a charity that is right for you.

Determine whether your donation is eligible for a tax credit

Registered charities and qualified donees may issue official donation receipts for gifts of money and goods. With these receipts, you can reduce your taxes when you file your annual income tax return. To confirm whether a charity is registered, go to www.cra.gc.ca/donors.

Get to know your charities

Start by visiting your charity's Web site and reviewing their publications. Learn about their activities and how they are managed.

Review financial information filed with the Canada Revenue Agency

All registered charities have to provide the Canada Revenue Agency with detailed financial information each year. This information is available to the public at www.cra.gc.ca/donors. If you have questions or concerns about the information, contact the charity for answers.

Ask questions

When you're asked to make a donation, ask yourself, "How will my money be used? Is the organization a registered charity?" You have the right to say "no"

Refuse to donate if there is inappropriate pressure to give immediately or you are offered a receipt for more than you actually donate. For more information, go to www.cra.gc.ca/donors or call 1-800-267-2384.

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The Power of Cooperation

Passion to Serve the Community

By Jerry Estrada

"It's very lonely at the top," a very common statement in the corporate world. People usually leave leaders alone in times of problems. This is also true in the cooperative movement. Strong, honest, and persistent leaders are hard to find these days. They are one of the endangered species in this world.

Last month, this column had touched on the problems of the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative. History tells us that the said cooperative had been mismanaged both by leaders and members. Lessons learned, pains felt, and tireless efforts spent – these are part of the experience of every cooperative, an experience that could not be avoided. Every small or large business entrepreneur would face the same thing.

As a believer in values, concept, and purpose of cooperatives, I could say that every cooperative would thrive if every member, and especially the leaders, continually nurture it. Cooperatives don't fail, only people do. Cooperatives have been tested and tried to be effective in uplifting people's lives. They have done this system in South Korea, Israel and other parts of the world.

Leaders play a major role in building the cooperative to make it successful. In my experience in the cooperative movement, I met different kinds of leaders. Cooperatives are not the right place to enrich leaders but an arena to dedicate their talents, skills, money and time for the community. It's hard to find true leaders inside the cooperative movement. It's an uncomfortable place to stay in, especially during its infancy stage.

Once a person gets an experience in the movement, it becomes a passion, a passion to serve the people. Even if it's

hard and tough to work with cooperatives, once one has had the experience of being in it, the intense emotion to serve, lives in their hearts forever.

I know there are some people from the Philippines, who have just arrived here in Montreal with experiences in cooperatives. Some of them have had big positions in large cooperatives in the Philippines.

I would like to ask the help of these people to join the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative and share their experience and knowledge. It needs people who have experiences in accounting, management, marketing, and in making cooperative policies and procedures.

Last week, I learned from the cooperative board of directors, specifically from Zeny Kharroubi, the president, that they are planning to conduct cooperative seminars. This is a good move. It is hard to convince people to join the movement if they don't understand the purpose of cooperatives. Education of members and prospective members is certainly an important factor for the success of cooperatives.

A cooperative is unique in nature. It's an organization to serve the people through economic activities. It's a group of people identified by shared interests or purpose to help one another. It's an arena where a common man would have the chance to own a business enterprise.

If you are interested to help the community through the cooperative, please contact or email the cooperative president at filipinocoop@gmail.com or to me at joest_leo@yahoo.ca. ■

A fashion show designed to liberate:

End the exploitation! March for Liberation! A political fashion show for International Women's Day

(Montreal, Quebec) Ever been to a fashion show where the bolts of fabric tell stories or where models strut their militancy? Don't miss this event, "End the Exploitation! March for Liberation!", organized by the Philippine Women of Centre of Quebec (PWCQ), a political fashion show where Filipino women unleash their artistic talent towards creating a change, addressing the struggles faced by women in the Filipino community. End the Exploitation! March for Liberation! will take place March 6, 2010, at the Centre Communautaire Côte-des-Neiges.

You are also invited to join hands with the community, and volunteer in the preparation of this cultural event, weaving the groundwork for positive action, right here in Pinoyville!

With International Women's Day fast approaching, people from around Montreal will be taking to the streets to show their support for equality, to celebrate the great women in their lives, and to denounce all forms of exploitation and oppression. Meanwhile, in Pinoyville, Filipino youth are preparing to march down the catwalk in an act of solidarity. The political fashion show aims to visually portray the current struggles of women in the Filipino community, to provoke thought, and to inspire all with a show of strength and hope for the future.

Historically, International Women's Day has been an occasion to press demands for justice, as well as to celebrate the struggles of women around the world who have devoted their lives to promoting liberation and equality. It has its beginnings during the industrial revolution when women were not even allowed to vote and ever-worsening working conditions led to protests by the women forced to work in such environments. In 1908, it so happened that 20,000 immigrant women took to the streets to call for improved working conditions in a garment factory. Their struggles inspired socialist women to press for an International Women's day. A few

years later, in 1917, Canadian women were given the right to vote. But, the struggle continues! With the Philippines as the top source country for most of Canada's migrant workers and immigrants, Filipinos are now filling Canada's needs for cheap labor like so many immigrant communities before them. Currently, the majority of Filipino immigrants are women, coming in under the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), a temporary foreign labour program that deskills members of the community across generations, leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, and forces them to live in slave-like conditions. Their labour may liberate one class of women from domestic work, however, it is the working-class women who are left with little or no childcare options. Then, there is the issue of family separation; the women working under the LCP are obligated to migrate to Canada leaving behind their children and family. In most cases, it can take eight years before mothers under the LCP is reunited with their children. Meanwhile, they are often the primary breadwinner of the family, sending most of their earnings home. "We want to take the stories of these courageous women and present them using fashion. Through this medium, we hope to raise the awareness of the exploitation that women are suffering" says Joanne Vasquez, Chairperson of PWCQ.

In celebration of International Women's Day, and in honor of past struggles, everyone at the PWCQ is excited to collaborate in the production of the political fashion show, End the Exploitation! March for Liberation! "Like the women who came before us, we need to take a stand, and fight for our genuine emancipation!" asserts Krystle Alarcon, Board Member of PWCQ. The Philippine Women Centre of Quebec invites you to join the march and support Filipino women in the fight for gender equality and justice.

Event details
 Date: Saturday, March 6, 2010
 Time: 5 pm (Doors open)
 Cost: \$10.00 donation
 Venue: Centre Communautaire Côte-des-Neiges, 6767 Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal - Contact: Krystle or Joy (514) 678-3901
 Website: www.kapitbisigcentre.org

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Al Abdon

The Karaoke Phenomenon - Stories around the bar

While reading more about Karaoke over the internet, I accidentally browse an article about incidents around karaoke bars.

Over the weekend, the New York Times ran an article about a disturbing trend: a series of murders in the Philippines over karaoke versions of Frank Sinatra's classic 'My Way'.

"I used to like 'My Way,' but after all the trouble, I stopped singing it," Rodolfo Gregorio tells the Times reporter after singing numbers from Tom Jones and Engelbert Humperdinck in the city of Pasig.

"You can get killed," he says, grimly.

It may seem like an urban myth but violence in karaoke bars has been a documented trend for a while. In 2008, a Malaysian man was killed for hugging the microphone for too long. And in 2007, a man was shot dead in San Mateo because he could not stay on the key.



Frank Sinatra

The articles reporting these karaoke murders both point out that 'My Way' has been known for its tendency to incite violence. The Times attempts to shed some light on the subject matter, presenting a number of theories. The simplest, and perhaps most plausible, argues that the Philippines is a violent place, awash with more than a million illegal guns. It's also a society in love with karaoke, and 'My Way' is a hugely popular song. The combination of these factors means that it is statistically likely that violence will occur at some point during a performance of 'My

Way.'

Another theory is that the song, with its somewhat conceited, pretentious, lyrics and attitude, leads to fights because of the atmosphere it creates. "I did it my way' -- it's so arrogant," Butch Albarracin, the owner of Center for Pop, a Manila-based singing school tells the Times. "The lyrics evoke feelings of pride and arrogance in the singer, as if you're somebody when you're really nobody. It covers up your failures. That's why it leads to fights."

Incidents like these are not confined in Southeast Asia. Recent incidents have included a British man in Bulgaria who beat up a couple of singers and trashed a karaoke bar after he felt a version of 'We Are The Champions' by Queen didn't meet his standards. The trend has hit America too. Lindsay Lawrence of Seattle beat up an unnamed singer after he tried to sing Coldplay's "Yellow." "Oh, no, not that song. I can't stand that song," she reportedly said before punching the singer twice in the face. It took three people to hold her down and in her karaoke-rage she allegedly head butted a police officer.

Now all these stories are bad, In Henderson Colorado what started as a bathroom break for country singer LeAnn Rimes and her boyfriend Eddie Cibrian turned into quite the surprise for patrons at the Tail Feathers karaoke bar northeast of Denver.

Rimes took the bar's stage to give a rendition of Lady GaGa's "Poker Face. US Magazine reports that she was serenading Cibrian who can be sing dancing in the front of the audience.

That is a lovely way to tribute a POP star from a great country singer. Well there you go. If you are scared of singing "My Way" at Karaoki bars or in public, I suggest to get yourself a Karaoki machine inside the safety of your own home. At least your wife, girlfriend, boyfriend and children are most sympathetic to your passion. Wireless Magic Mics either single or twins are available at Mariz restaurant (514) 940-2872 at Decarie Blvd.

Happy Singing!

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Olympic women's hockey comes to Canada

(NC)—Women's hockey becomes an Olympic event! 1998 Nagano Olympic games

Making history. Only six teams competed in the inaugural year, with USA taking the gold, Canada silver and Finland bronze.

Olympic women's hockey grows. Since those first games in 1998, eight teams have competed each year for the Olympic gold.

Canada dominates Olympic women's hockey. The two-time gold medal winning Canadian team took the top spot in both the 2002 Salt Lake City



games (Canada gold, USA silver, Sweden bronze) and the 2006 Turin games (Canada gold, Sweden silver, USA bronze).

Prelude to 2010 Olympic games. Having dropped five of their last six games to Canada, the two-time defending world champion U.S. team will have a tough time against the Canadian team, who will be playing with home ice advantage.

Canadian Women's Hockey League players on 2010 team roster:

Becky Kellar, D, Burlington Barracudas
Born: January 1, 1975
Olympic experience: Nagano, Salt Lake City and Turin

Caroline Ouellette, F, Montreal Stars
Born: May 25, 1979 in Montreal, QC
Olympic experience: Salt Lake City and Turin

Jennifer Botterill, F, Mississauga Chiefs
Born: May 1, 1979
Olympic experience: Nagano, Salt Lake City and Turin

Jayna Hefford, F, Brampton Canadette-Thunder
Born: May 14, 1977
Olympic experience: Nagano, Salt Lake City and Turin

Kim St-Pierre, G, Montreal Stars
Born: December 14, 1978
Olympic experience: Salt Lake City and Turin

Gillian Apps, F, Brampton Canadette-Thunder
Born: November 2, 1983
Olympic experience: Turin

Marie-Philip Poulin, F, Montreal Stars
Born: March 28, 1991

Cherie Piper, F, Mississauga Chiefs
Born: June 29, 1981
Olympic experience: Salt Lake City and Turin

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Happy Birthday Party for Verilyn Shulak (2nd from left), February 14, with her classmates and teacher in French. Seated: Dilge Karatas, Jennalyn Macadangdang, Ruby Tubadeza and Adorina Ortega.



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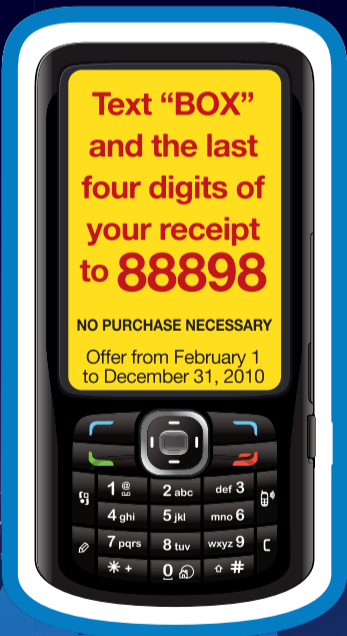
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Claudine Barretto enraged Pacquiao's training hits a high chord over land dispute



Something is making Claudine Barretto mad, and it's not Mark Anthony.

The actress and her husband, Raymart Santiago, are caught in a land dispute after they were allegedly tricked by the seller.

It turned out that the five-hectare farm lot in Cuyambay, Tanay, already has an owner and is set to sign the papers this month.

She said they have been waiting for years for the documents to be accomplished.

"Whether ibalik 'yung pera namin or ano, the fact is more than a year na... magti-three na 'yung anak ko [Santino] this year, and si Sabina,

six years old na.

"Lahat ng oras na dapat nagtatatakbo sila sa farm nila and everytime na may long weekend, hindi namin alam kung saan kami pupunta... Hindi naman porket mga bata kami ni Raymart eh puwede na nila kami lokohin," an enraged Claudine said on "Showbiz Central."

As of February 13, Claudine said that according to her lawyer, Raymond Fortun, the papers are okay.

"Okay na daw 'yung papers. But we'll have to wait for something again. We're really praying about it eh. Halos atakihin na ko sa puso!" she said. ■

With folk music blaring on the background, Manny Pacquiao, the current king of boxing, spoke the language of confidence Thursday moments after another tough day at the Wild Card Boxing Club, his training headquarters for the March 13 clash with Joshua Clottey in Dallas.



Manny Pacquiao loves boxing and singing.

"No problem, I feel very good," Pacquiao told The Bulletin after having his favorite meal at a Thai food restaurant located a few steps from the gym. "Tell our people that there's nothing to worry as I am training hard."

Pacquiao stressed that having little time for a good vacation after beating Miguel Cotto late last year turned out to be a blessing since he is not having a hard time getting back in shape.

"After only two weeks in the gym, I already felt great and I think it was not

only because I am coming off a tough fight but I had to immediately report back to training camp," said Pacquiao, who asked his interviewer to hold the long distance call while he sings the final notes of a song on karaoke.

As soon as he belted out the last note, Pacquiao was on the line again, assuring the man on the other end that there's nothing to worry about as far as his preparation is concerned.

Pacquiao's assurance that everything is right on track was echoed by Alex Ariza, the Filipino fighter's touted conditioning coach.

"Manny is ready to fight this Saturday," said Ariza, who marveled at the way the 32-year-old pound-for-pound king handled himself with the punch mitts during Wednesday's workout.

"He did 15 rounds in the mitts without even a sip of water," narrated Ariza.

Over at Clottey's training camp in Fort Lauderdale in Florida, the boxingscene website reported that the Ghana slugger is also right on the money.

Clottey has been working out at the Contender's Gym the last three weeks under the guidance of a new set of trainers since Godwin Dzanie Kotey, his long-time trainer, has yet to be granted a renewal of his US visa.

Despite the drawback, Clottey said he has no other choice but to move on.

"I already know in my head what I am going to do and how I am going to win," Clottey said. ■

Is there a Mama Sita in your dish?



Asked about how they started in the food business, many entrepreneurs say it was because they simply loved to cook, or they came from a family of restaurateurs, or they concocted a recipe that became so popular by word of mouth that it propelled them to start a food business. Whatever the food—pastry, meat, seafood, veggies—the cooking technique must have been fine-tuned to perfection and the ingredients of top quality.

Because of the stiff competition, one can understand why restaurant

chefs keep mum about their ingredients and techniques. Nevertheless, discerning homemakers and food lovers know that one prime ingredient of a tasty dish is the quality of mixes and sauces. In the Philippines and in many parts of the world, the presence of Mama Sita's mixes and sauces proves the popularity of its natural flavors.

Teresita "Mama Sita" Reyes, the culinary icon behind the product line that bears her name, came from a family of excellent cooks and food lovers.

Her mother, Doña Engracia Reyes, is known as the "Mother of Filipino Cooking". Her family ran the enduringly popular Aristocrat restaurant, which is why at an early age, her life already revolved around the world of food. Mama Sita never got tired of experimenting with cooking techniques and reinventing recipes. She wrote down her culinary discoveries, from which sprung Mama Sita's mixes and sauces.

Filipino chefs and restaurateurs overseas do not hesitate to name one of their best ingredients—Mama Sita's. In Washington D.C., Chef Evelyn Singson prepares adobo or afritada using Mama Sita. During a food demo

at the Marriott Hotel in Washington, Chef Evelyn says she suggested to the hotel staff the right way in using Mama Sita's Adobo Mix to give the Chicken Adobo and Eggplant Adobo that pronounced 'adobo' taste. "They were very receptive!" she enthusiastically reports.



In Ontario, Ellen's Place has become the biggest venue of Philippine cuisine for Filipinos and foreigners in Canada. Its owner, Ellen Deperio Ho, originally from Pangasinan, has only praises for Mama Sita's products. "I know that Mama Sita's products use only the freshest

ingredients. That gave me the assurance that I am using premium quality products in my dishes. Consequently, it gave me the confidence to use it in my restaurant. And judging from the turnout of customers, I know I did the right thing in using Mama Sita's sauces and mixes," says Ellen.

So don't be surprised if you find out that your favorite restaurant's kare-kare, caldereta and sinigang (and many more) were all prepared using Mama Sita's products. You can understand if they want to keep secret their cooking ingredients, but you can be sure they choose food items and products only after stringent quality and taste tests.

Thinking of putting up your own restaurant or home-based food business? Mama Sita's mixes and sauces can help realize your dream, just as many other entrepreneurs here and abroad have proven when they began using Mama Sita's products to create an exciting menu.

For more information about the versatile uses of Mama Sita's Mixes and Sauces, log on to www.msita.com or email them at info@msita.com. ■



Philippine Cuisine

Kaldereta



Kaldereta is a dish popular in the Philippines, especially in Luzon island. Its common ingredients are cuts of pork, beef or goat with tomato paste or tomato sauce with liver spread added to it. In Metro Manila it is more commonly added with potatoes but in other regions such as Southern Tagalog provinces, it is simply the sauce and the cuts of meat that are used. There are other meats that can also be used such as chicken but pork, beef and goat are the three more popular cuts of meat used.

Ingredients:

Estimated cooking time: 1 1/2 to 2 hours

Beef Kaldereta Ingredients:

- * 1 kilo beef, cut into chunks
- * 1 big can (350g) liver spread or ground liver
- * 5 onions, minced
- * 5 cloves garlic, minced
- * 6 tomatoes, sliced
- * 1 cup tomato sauce
- * 3 green peppers, diced
- * 3 red peppers, diced
- * 4 pieces hot chilli peppers, minced
- * 3/4 cup grated cheese
- * 2 cups beef stock or water
- * 1/4 cup cooking or olive oil

Kaldereta Cooking Instructions:

- * In a casserole, sauté: garlic and onions in oil. Then add tomatoes, red & green pepper and chilli peppers.
- * Add in the beef, tomato sauce, liver spread and water or stock. Salt to taste and let simmer for at least 1 hour or until the beef is tender.
- * Add cheese and olives (optional) and continue to simmer until the sauce thickens.
- * Serve with plain rice

Cooking Tips:

- * Instead of beef, goat's meat (kambing) can be used. If goat's meat is used, marinate the meat in vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper for at least 15 minutes.
- * For a special kaldereta, do not

use water or beef stock. Use an equivalent weight of onions to the beef (1 kg of onions : 1 kg of beef). The onions will serve as water to the dish.

Banana Fritters or Maruya



Ingredients

- 1 cup filtered flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 4 tbsp milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 egg, beaten
- 4 ripe bananas, saba
- 1/2 cup cooking oil
- powdered sugar
- chocolate syrup
- ice cream (vanilla flavor)(optional)

Instructions:

1. Sift flour, baking powder, salt sugar and cinnamon. Add milk, water, vanilla and egg to the dry ingredients and mix until batter is smooth.
2. Peel the bananas and slice lengthwise into 4 pieces. Dip in the batter and roll lightly in flour. Deep fry in cooking oil, browning evenly. Drain and serve with powdered sugar, chocolate syrup and vanilla ice cream if desired.

Filipino Chicken BBQ (Chicken Inasal)



Ingredients

- 1 roasting chicken, quartered
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon fresh coarse ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 4 stalks lemongrass, julienned

1 lemon, juice of, extracted
 1 lime, juice of, extracted
 1/4 cup annatto seeds, soaked in 1/4 cup water
 1/4 cup garlic butter, melted
 salt
 chili pepper flakes
 Combine the juices of lemon and lime, divide in 2 equal parts. Marinate chicken overnight in salt, pepper, garlic, lemon grass, half lime and lemon juice mixture and siling labuyo for additional spicy. Mix marinade with the water that has been used to soak the annatto seeds and margarine. Pour the mixture in a saucepan, bring to a rolling boil for 5 to 10 minutes. Adjust seasoning with

salt and pepper flakes if desired. Barbecue chicken over hot coals or grill brushing it with the prepared mixture, cook to desired doneness. ■

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HEALTH NEWS

The pharmacist is your partner in diabetes management

(NC)—All over Canada, governments are realizing the untapped potential of their pharmacists and are expanding pharmacists' scope of practice to allow them the authority to better manage their patients' medication regimes using their own clinical judgment. This is great news for all and especially those with diabetes who can achieve better outcomes and live healthier, longer lives through regular, ongoing monitoring and management of their condition by their pharmacist.

All pharmacists have a good understanding of diabetes and diabetes management; with new discoveries and treatment guidelines released regularly, some pharmacists acquire additional certifications or accreditations in the management of diabetes. Did you know that some pharmacies offer programs and education to help you achieve your target blood glucose levels and A1C targets? Your pharmacist should help you understand the importance of regular self monitoring and provide you with tools to track and monitor your results. At Rexall, they even have the Rexall Diabetes Starter Kit – for all newly diagnosed patients – and everyone else interested in learning more about diabetes. This kit provides all the tools and education needed to help the newly diagnosed get started on the right track.

Adherence to the medication regime prescribed by your doctor is extremely important in keeping glucose levels in check and avoiding the potential organ damage caused by uncontrolled glucose. Compliance packaging and medication reminders are important value-added services your pharmacy can offer to help you with your medications.

There is an abundance of support products for persons with diabetes. From diabetic socks to glucose tablets and blood glucose monitors to insulin pump supplies. Your pharmacy should have it all to meet your needs.

Don't settle for second best when it comes to your health and managing your medical conditions. Talk to your pharmacy about the services they offer to diabetics and don't be afraid to go looking for more.

More information on managing your diabetes and how your pharmacist can help, can be found online at www.rexall.ca/diabetes.

www.newscanada.com

Get the 411 on managing your diabetes

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(NC)—Most people don't realize that diabetes is not only the world's fourth leading cause of death, it's also increasing daily and now affects an

estimated 246 million people globally. Despite the odds, Canadians with diabetes can educate themselves about their condition and take control of their daily management with ongoing care and the support of their doctor, pharmacist, family and friends.

Here are some tips to help you get on the right path to successful diabetes management:

Get the 411

Getting the information you need about your condition and how to manage it is one of the most important steps to success. Check out credible websites to learn about the disease, symptoms and management tips. Elicit the support of family members and friends in developing and sticking to a diet and exercise regimen that works for you. Your doctor and pharmacist are probably the most valuable resources because they can provide you with information specific to your condition. Talk to a Rexall pharmacist about the new Rexall Diabetes Starter Kit containing all the tools and information you need - in one package - to begin your treatment. The kit is designed to ensure the newly diagnosed receive high-quality information and guidance to help with their diabetes management routine.

Regular Testing

Keeping your blood glucose levels in a healthy range may require checking your blood glucose several times a day. Self-monitoring is an integral part of diabetes management because it puts you in the driver's seat. Regardless of how you manage your diabetes — through diet and exercise alone or combined with oral medicines or insulin — regular blood glucose monitoring provides immediate feedback on how your program is working. Some studies have found that the more often people monitor their blood glucose with a conventional blood glucose meter, the better their glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) levels, thereby decreasing the progression of the long-term consequences of diabetes.

Diet and Exercise

If these are two words you love to hate, then you better start loving them. Healthy eating and physical activity provide a host of benefits for your quality of life, blood glucose control, and overall health. Exercise, not only burns glucose, it improves the body's ability to use insulin. This improvement in insulin sensitivity may allow some people with Type 2 diabetes to reduce or even discontinue blood-glucose-lowering medicines with increased physical activity. If you're making a commitment to physical activity or making any major changes in your diet, make sure you talk to your doctor to discuss any limitations or

restrictions you may have.

Follow up with Your Team

It's often said that diabetes is best managed with a team approach. Your physician and pharmacist are your key points of contact. Your doctor will prescribe medicines for you, recommend target blood glucose goals, order laboratory tests, examine you, and look out for your overall health. Your pharmacist helps you manage your drug therapy, identifies potentially harmful interactions among the drugs and over-the-counter products you use, and provides you with advice on lifestyle choices, alternate therapies and new products or services available at the pharmacy in the management of diabetes. It's also important to know that many pharmacists also have additional training in diabetes care and management. Many have even become certified diabetes educators, and some offer diabetes classes or one-on-one educational sessions in local pharmacies.

More information, tips and podcasts about managing your diabetes are available online at www.rexall.ca/diabetes.

Diabetes starter kits provide vital information

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(NC)—Over 40 per cent of Canadians diagnosed with a life-threatening disease, such as diabetes, feel confused or overwhelmed after leaving their doctor's office, shows a Leger Marketing survey commissioned by the Rexall family of pharmacies.

When faced with the abundance of information, medication and tools needed for a disease such as diabetes, many Canadians are daunted by the prospect of managing their illness alone. To provide a convenient one-stop resource for Canadians living with diabetes, Rexall and Accu-Chek recently launched the Rexall Diabetes Starter Kit to ensure the newly diagnosed receive high-quality information and guidance to help with their diabetes management routine. The kit includes all the tools and information they need - in one package - to begin their treatment (with the exception of prescription medication).

This product provides a starting point for Canadians to ask their pharmacist questions about their medication management, the tools they'll need to monitor blood glucose and an opportunity to receive accurate information about the needs and requirements specific to their condition.

"With diabetes on the rise, it's so important for Canadians, young and old, to get as much information as possible from trusted resources like their pharmacist," said Tracey Phillips, director of pharmacy services and marketing at Rexall. "We created the Diabetes Starter Kit to provide a convenient, one-stop, easy-to-access

resource for every newly diagnosed Canadian who is feeling overwhelmed or confused by his or her situation."

This kit is available nationally at Rexall and Rexall Pharma Plus stores across Canada. The kit is free with the purchase of 100 Accu-Chek Aviva or 102 Accu-Chek Compact Plus test strips.

You can find more information, tips and podcasts about managing your diabetes online at www.rexall.ca/diabetes.

www.newscanada.com ■

Turn your medicine cabinet green

(NC)—Virtually everyone is thinking about ways they can be "greener", whether it's at home, the office, or the type of car they drive – you name it, there is a "green" alternative to just about everything these days. But when it comes to disposing of leftover or expired medications, some are at a loss.

Fact is, people do not always finish the full course of prescribed medications and over-the-counter medicines are often kept in the medicine cabinet until expiry dates have passed. Throwing these leftover pharmaceuticals in the trash or flushing them down the drain can pose a serious risk to the environment. Furthermore, the presence of small amounts of these substances in water is emerging as an important national and international issue. Although the concentrations are low, adverse effects on humans and animals may be possible and there are also concerns about the human health effects of medication in drinking water sources.

Luckily, pharmacy retailers like Rexall have taken this issue to heart. Rexall offers customers a simple and free solution - drop off your unused or expired medications to your local Rexall pharmacy and our pharmacists will dispose of them in an environmentally safe way. And while you're visiting, take the chance to speak to your pharmacist about what's needed to restock your medicine cabinet or ask any questions you may have regarding your medication therapy.

Here are some helpful tips to "going green" with your medicine cabinet:

- At least once a year, you should look at your medicine cabinet and remove any medications that have expired or that you no longer use (even if they aren't expired).
- Do not flush or pour unused medicines down a sink or drain.
- Do not throw your old medications in the trash as children or pets may get into it and it could cause potential harm.

• Always take your leftover or expired medications to your local pharmacy for safe and environmentally-friendly disposal. More information can be obtained from your local Rexall family pharmacist or online at www.rexall.ca/medicinescabinet.

www.newscanada.com ■

Campaign season starts on Villar takes Aquino's challenge dirty-tricks mode

THE Nacionalista Party accused the Liberal Party Monday of spreading false text messages claiming that Senator Manuel Villar Jr. had forged a secret deal to make President Arroyo speaker of the House in exchange for logistical support during the presidential campaign.

"The latest black propaganda dished out by the LP call center of lies really showed its desperation to undermine Senator Villar's presidential bid," Nacionalista spokesman and senatorial bet Gilbert Remulla said a day before the official campaign period for national candidates begins.

The text message alleged that Villar had met secretly with the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, at the residence of former Quezon City Rep. Michael Defensor on Jan. 7 to gain the help of Mrs. Arroyo's appointees in the Commission on Elections to ensure a Villar victory in the May 10 polls.

Villar dismissed the text message as ridiculous.

"There is absolutely no truth to it. We respect the intelligence of people and we know they will not fall for this kind of lies and allegations that the LP is peddling," Remulla said.

Remulla said Villar and Mr. Arroyo had not been on good terms since the Senate investigated the fertilizer fund scam and the national broadband network deal with ZTE Corp. of China.

Defensor himself dismissed the

supposed meeting as fictitious. He said it could not have happened since he and his wife were on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and returned to the country on Jan. 8.

Remulla said the people behind the malicious text message did not even check the facts. "How could Villar have a meeting with [Mr. Arroyo]?" he said.

"First of all, they are not on speaking terms because they have a grudge toward each other. Second, Mike Defensor arrived on January 8 from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land."

Remulla said the Nacionalistas expected more black propaganda given Villar's recent surge in the surveys and a decline in support for the Liberal Party bet, Senator Benigno Aquino III.

"It is really panic time for the other camp, and their desperation is showing in their political maneuverings," Remulla said.

"They have resorted to weaving malicious tales in order to bring down their opponent. The call center of lies is really getting busier as the election draws near."

The Liberal Party, meanwhile, has blamed Aquino's falling survey ratings to "unrelenting and increasingly below-the-belt and baseless black propaganda" on Hacienda Luisita, among others, against him by his opponents. ■

Gibo goes where Erap fears to tread

Deposed president Joseph Estrada boycotted a forum on presidential candidates Monday in Quezon City, fearing that he would be asked trick questions.

It was Lakas-Kampi-CMD standard-bearer Gilberto "Gibo" Teodoro Jr. who dealt with the first of questions, the type usually asked of beauty-pageant contestants.

"If you are to rank three people—President Arroyo, your uncle and business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco and mother-in-law Mary Beth de Leon—who would you rank as most important to you when they get into trouble with the law?" It came from journalist Fe Zamora, one of the panelists.

Teodoro, a Harvard law graduate, ranked his mother-in-law most important of the three. "If there is no mother-in-law, there is no daughter and if there is no daughter, there is no wife," Teodoro said. He said both Arroyo and Cojuangco were equals.

Teodoro said these people may be important to him but that he would not obstruct justice when they get into trouble with the law.

"I will not intervene if cases are filed against them but I would also make sure that their rights are properly observed," said Teodoro, drawing cheers and applause from the audience.

Before the question-and-answer session began, forum host John Nery

announced that Estrada would not be able to make it. "We regret his decision and we wish him good luck," Nery said.

Estrada's spokesman, Margaux Salcedo, explained the former leader's absence. "The executive committee of the campaign felt that Inquirer is always biased against Erap [Estrada], that it would work more harm than good to attend. Thus, it advised President Erap not to go."

Besides, Salcedo said Estrada is entertaining visitors from Mindanao and that he was preparing for a proclamation rally today that would start at 3 p.m. at the Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, Manila.

Salcedo said Estrada though that he would be asked trap questions. "And he was right. He was supposed to be asked questions about divorce. But knowing how conservative he is and a practicing Catholic at that, he would have said he would oppose it," Salcedo said.

Senator Jamby Madrigal drew jeers from the crowd because while she claimed she was pro-poor, she did not know how much each galunggong (scad) and itlog na maalat (red eggs) cost.

"I think it's about P60 a kilo," Madrigal said, but the crowd shouted "No!"

Madrigal's excuse: You know I cannot answer that. I will be honest, because I'm a vegetarian. I don't eat fish or eggs. ■

Nacionalista Party standard bearer, Senator Manny Villar, has accepted the challenge of Senator Benigno Aquino III for a public debate, saying that it is not a platform for mudslinging but an opportunity to present his plans and programs of government.



Philippine presidential candidate Senator Manny Villar (R) speaks during an election campaign rally in Calamba, Laguna south of Manila February 9, 2010

Sarah Geronimo endorses Manny Villar



Pop princess Sarah Geronimo is the newest addition to the roster of celebrities endorsing Nacionalista Party standard bearer Sen. Manny Villar.

Geronimo sang Villar's latest political jingle titled "Naging Mahirap" during the launching of Katropa, a youth group organized by Villar's daughter, Camille. Geronimo has been named the campaign's ambassador.

Villar's camp said it recognizes Geronimo's patience and hard work that resulted in her success.

The senator's camp, however, refused to confirm if Geronimo was paid P20 million in exchange for her

CONTINUED From P. 7 AQUINO

the start of his term.

"Doing it early in the term prevents suspicion of term extension.

as motivation," Aquino said. "I want to resolve the issue [in a way] that is devoid of passion."

Aquino also wanted the loopholes plugged in the impeachment process, the power of the purse and the rules governing the Commission on Appointments.

"The Constitution says the power of the purse emanates from the House. But the President ignores that provision by influencing the budget and pushes her own flawed economic policy by vetoing important provisions for social services," Aquino said.

"The national budget is supposed to

"Name the place, name the time; I will be there," Villar said in a statement.

Villar said candidates to the nation's highest elective post, should have more productive endeavors to pursue than engage each other in mudslinging contest.

Aquino challenged Villar to a debate after the Nacionalista standard-bearer boycotted a forum of presidential bets Monday.

Villar was in HongKong meeting with officials of the El Shaddai movement headed by Brother Mike Velarde.

Aquino and Villar, both frontrunners in presidential surveys, have also been swapping charges against each other.

While both camps claimed to represent the opposition, the Liberals accused Villar of being in league with the Arroyo administration, giving rise to the so-called "Villaroy" partnership. But the Nacionalistas countered that it was actually the Liberals who were in cahoots with the ruling party as evidenced by several Aquino relatives who have been holding plum posts in government. ■

endorsement.

Geronimo, on the other hand, said she believes television host-actress Kris Aquino will not take it against her once she learns that she is supporting Villar in the coming May elections. Kris's brother, Liberal Party (LP) standard bearer Sen. Benigno "Noy" Aquino III, is currently Villar's biggest rival in the presidential race.

Aside from Geronimo, Villar had earlier gained endorsements from Comedy King Dolphy and popular noontime host Willie Revillame.

Villar, meantime, defended himself from critics who are hitting him for getting celebrity endorsers and spending huge amounts in his campaign. He pointed out that, unlike the LP standard bearer, he has no popular parents nor strong connections in show business.

Villar also denied claims that he is the real candidate of President Arroyo, and that they made a secret pact assuring President Arroyo's position in Congress. ■

cure poverty, infrastructure lack and bridge the gap on the deficit, but some budgets get realigned to electioneering," Aquino said, citing the alleged P734-million fertilizer scam. "How come the deficit has since ballooned?"

Aquino also said the impeachment rules allowed the House to kill a complaint by finding it insufficient in form, and without hearing the evidence.

"The safeguard should be to allow the evidence to be shown to allow the members to decide whether or not the impeachment complaint indeed is sufficient in form and in substance," Aquino said.

He said the Arroyo administration had not only abused its power of discretion but even gone beyond constitutional bounds. ■

FILIPINO STAR SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Charice set to return to 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show'



International singing sensation Charice will likely make a second appearance on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" to promote her first international album.

"Sa paglabas ng album ko I might be there in her show to promote my album. Kasi kapag lumabas ang album ko ay dadaan ako sa kanya kasi sa kanya ako nauna," said Charice in her exclusive interview.

Many remember Charice making her big splash into the global limelight after appearing on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" in 2007. DeGeneres invited Charice after watching the Filipino singer's performance on YouTube.

Media mogul Oprah Winfrey later invited her to her talk show. Since then, Winfrey has been personally involved in her international career.

Charice disclosed that her scheduled appearance on Ellen has Winfrey's blessings.

"Pumayag po si Ms. Oprah na mag-guest ako sa show niya (DeGeneres) at pumayag siya (DeGeneres) na mag-guest ako sa show niya. So, wala pong problema," Charice added.

Charice, also a contract star of ABS-CBN's music outfit Star Records, is gearing up for the launching of her much anticipated album in the United States.

According to Charice, her international album is expected to be released early this year. Her CD includes "Note to God," a song composed by Grammy Award-winning Diane Warren.

Charice takes Italy by storm

Charice recently was invited to perform in a singing-only version of an America's Got Talent-type contest and took Italy by storm! She was

promptly hailed as an international superstar and was even invited to sing a duet of "The Prayer" with Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli.



Charice & Andrea Bocelli

But the real excitement came when she was teamed up with another teen sensation, 13-year-old Cristian Imarato. Now I'm too old in the tooth to really understand all of this, but I was moved, so much so that you have to watch these two remarkable and extraordinary kids appearing on *Io Canto (I Sing)*. The program was broadcast on Italy's national RAI TV network.

At their young ages, they both showed that they've got what it takes for stardom and that their names will become recognized worldwide in the years to come.

A friend of mine from Tuscany who knew that I'd met Charice many times here in Las Vegas emailed me, "She simply took Italy by storm. The audiences were chanting for her, and she's captured the hearts of the entire nation." ■

Will Manny's TV5 be a major third force alongside ABS-CBN & GMA7?

Article by Butch Francisco

Filipino TV viewers should expect a major third force on the local small screen very soon (faster than you can click channels with your remote control).



TV5 Owner & Chairman Manny Pangilinan

For the past two decades, ABS-CBN and GMA 7 had been monopolizing the Philippine television industry and had been pounding on each other — just the two networks forever locked in a battle for supremacy.

TV5, however, is now hell-bent on joining the race once more and is determined not to lose this time. Actually an old station known for quality entertainment like *Balintataw* and once the best source of current affairs and information (the *Big News* with the late Jose Mari Velez), Channel 5 was also shut down by martial law on Sept. 23, 1972 (Marcos merely predated that to Sept. 21 because he believed that seven was his lucky number: $7 \times 3 = 21$).

But unlike ABS-CBN, which was reopened by the Lopezes within months after Marcos was sent packing to Makiki Heights in 1986, TV5 did not become operational until Edward Tan gambled on it in 1992. A lot of other tycoons took over its reins, but lost.

This time, it is Manny Pangilinan who is calling the shots and prospects for TV5 seem brighter because this business genius always had this uncanny ability to turn anything he touches into gold.

To illustrate the impact Pangilinan's entry is creating at the moment, stars from ABS-CBN and GMA 7 are in a state of happy confusion and for the first time are finally reading the fine prints of the contract they annually sign perfunctorily with their respective networks to check if they are legally free to join the exodus to Channel 5.

Pangilinan's people — mostly young to give the network the much-needed energy and dynamism — are also busy addressing all the concerns of on-cam talents (and even those

working behind the camera) who are tempted to take the risk of trying out a new home.

Trivial as this may sound (but should actually be taken into consideration seriously), the first question the talent asks is: Am I willing to report to work on a regular basis to a studio that is practically 10 minutes away from Baguio?

Situated in far, far San Bartolome in Novaliches, the problem of location had always been a major drawback for TV5 in its attempt to lure artists even from way back. (The pre-martial law studio was located in Pasong Tamo in Makati.) Channel 5, however, is now willing to acquire studios that are more accessible to its new talents.

Of utmost concern, of course, is talent fee. From what I've been told, the network is offering the sweetest deals ever in the history of Philippine TV. To those celebrities planning to sit down with Channel 5 executives on the bargaining table, don't blame me if the offer doesn't turn out as sweet as you expected — I merely heard and the deal may not apply to all.

Security of tenure? Even that area is said to be fully-covered — again, I was just told. Pangilinan obviously means business and local stars (at least, those who matter) had never been put in such delicious (but tricky) predicament where they need to play their cards right.

So far, TV5 under Pangilinan's helm had already snagged some of the biggest stars in the country: Dolphy, Vic Sotto, Joey de Leon and Maricel Soriano. Other showbiz big-names are expected to come in within the coming months up to next year.

Channel 5, of course, is not keen on tampering with its already existing goldmines (except for a minor tweak or two): Ryan Agoncillo's *Talentadong Pinoy*, a program so successful, it changed viewers' tastes; Lucy Torres' *Shall We Dance?* (to be turned into a reality dance show) and Oyo Sotto's *Midnight DJ*, which will even add more young stars.

So far, this is what Channel 5 promises the Pinoy viewer: The return of sitcoms (Joey Reyes is coming in to train and supervise writers), a strong afternoon slot and a lot of honest-to-goodness drama anthologies. The rest of their plans, of course, they are not revealing yet, but the driving force behind the network are determined to provide Filipinos with premium entertainment on television.

But how far will Channel 5 succeed or even stay and is there enough advertising pie to go around? Nobody can really tell.

Now, I am not an expert at numerology (heck, I don't even know basic arithmetic), but there are numbers playing in my mind now: $7 - 2 = 5$ ■

Richard Gomez barred from running Bea back to work with John Lloyd for Congress, will appeal case



Richard Gomez

Richard Gomez, in his third stab at politics, suffered another setback when the Commission on Elections (Comelec) barred him from seeking the congressional seat of the fourth

district of Leyte, where his wife Lucy Torres-Gomez' hometown of Ormoc City is located, for lack of residency.

Gomez vowed to appeal the case.

The case stemmed from the petition that Buenaventura Juntilla, a former barangay chairman in Ormoc, had earlier filed to Comelec claiming that Gomez doesn't reside in Ormoc as stated in his certificate of candidacy but in Greenhills, San Juan.

Gomez then contested that since March 2007, he has been spending more time in Leyte than in Manila and that his political opponents were behind what he believed was harassment.

In 2004, he ran under the partylist group, Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD), which was disqualified by the Commission on Elections (Comelec). He also failed to win a senatorial slot in the 2007 polls.

In a recent interview, Torres-Gomez shrugged off negative issues concerning her actor-husband's electoral plans. She said she looks forward to hitting the campaign trail as soon as it officially starts on March 26. ■



Bea Alonzo

Kapamilya star Bea Alonzo is very proud with "Miss You Like Crazy," the latest offering of Star Cinema this February.

Bea will star together with longtime on-screen partner John Lloyd Cruz.

Under the direction of Cathy Garcia-Molina, "Miss You Like Crazy" will open this 24th of February.

The actress said that this comeback movie with John Lloyd is not the usual love story the audience already seen in big screens.

"This is not the usual movie where boy meets girl. In this movie, they have different trials that are not seen physically. It's very different with me because I'm playing a character that she's not always in the right side, sometimes she also commits mistakes," she said.

The actress added: "It's a story of

infidelity; it will be from the perspective of the guy, so it will explain his actions in this kind of situations."

Bea also had a hard time in doing this movie with the rest of the crew because its been a long time since they work again together.

Its been a while since I work with director Cathy and almost three years since One More Chance with John Lloyd so I was really adjusting. I felt nervous because I felt that I'm new again in the group, but I was able to adjust well in the set because we always have fun in the set," the actress said.

In our interview with director Cathy Garcia-Molina, she said that Bea matured really well as a person and as an actress.

Direk Cathy said that she now knows what and when to give in, to control her emotions and understands the plot of the story very well.

Bea was very flattered upon hearing all the good things that was said about her as an actress.

"It's so flattering to hear that especially that it comes from Direk Cathy. For me my big chance to interact with Direk Cathy and all the cast is big opportunity already," she said.

The actress also added that she is very proud of this movie because its collaboration between director and actors.

Bea still believes that their loveteam is very much supported by the people because they are a clean loveteam.

"Our being true to the people, we don't need to do certain gimmicks for us to be liked by people. It's a clean loveteam that earned a lot of support from the fans," she said. ■

Nora Aunor reveals life in the US



Nora Aunor

Is superstar Nora Aunor really coming home this year? Yes.

The Philippines' one and only superstar is raring for a grand comeback after spending more than five years in California, where she pursued her singing career.

"Ipokrita ako kung sasabihin ko na hindi ko nami-miss ang mga anak ko at ang trabaho ko sa Pilipinas at ipinangako ko sa sarili ko na babalik ako ngayong 2010 at `yan ang ipinagdarasal ko na matupad," she tells us when we met her during our recent visit to L.A.. We met her twice over dinner and lunch in two different restaurants in Beverly Hills, California where she stays.

During our dinner, together with good friend and L.A. based Rhyon Deles, Guy proudly showed us her green card which she recently acquired. The green card allows her to enter the U.S. without having to seek a U.S. visa.

In our very intimate talk, Guy admitted that she's not leading a good life in the U.S. but she's learned a lot.

"Kahit naman siguro kahit saang lugar, may mga mababait, matitino at may mga masasamang tao. Hindi naiiba rito sa Amerika. May mga totoo at hindi totooang tao sa mga kababayan

natin. Aminado ako na maraming tao akong pinagkakautangan ng loob dito sa Amerika, pero may mga tao ring manloloko. Sa halip na tulungan ka, sila pa ang maninira at mangda-down sa `yo. May mga tao ring hindi tutupad sa usapan at kung ano ang pinagkasunduan. Marami rin akong natutunan dito at kasama na rito ang tibay ng loob. I have to admit na may pagka-rebelde akong tao laluna kung hindi matino ang kausap ko," she declared.

Whatever she's been through in the U.S. is now water under the bridge. She's looking forward to her much-anticipated return to the Philippines and to get herself busy with work.

"I don't mind starting from scratch. Sanay ako sa hirap na siya kong pinagmulan. Sana'y nandiyan pa rin sila, ang mga taong naniniwala at may tiwala pa rin sa akin. Sana'y may puwang pa rin sa akin ang showbiz," she humbly stated.

With the help of her selfless good friend, the ever dependable Kuya Germs (German Moreno) and some well-meaning friends, Guy is definitely making true to her promise to come home.

"There's nothing like home. Iba pa rin talaga ang Pilipinas. Excited na talaga akong makabalik," she enthused.

Guy confided to us that there are ongoing negotiations for various projects waiting for her upon her return to the Philippines but she can't reveal them until they're final.

"That makes me more excited na makabalik ng Pilipinas dahil may babalikan akong trabaho," she said. ■

Judy-Ann Santos & Sarah Geronimo movie in the works



Sarah Geronimo & Judy-Ann Santos

This early, the local moviedom is celebrating already because of the much-awaited major movie project starring two of the country's superstars, Teleserye Queen Judy Ann Santos and Pop Princess Sarah Geronimo under Viva Films.

Viva Big Boss Vic del Rosario is mighty proud of this project of a lifetime. He said, "This is the first time that Juday and Sarah will be seen in one movie. That is a casting coup in itself. But other than the two of them, we also enlisted veteran actress Gina Pareno and young actor Luis Manzano to join the cast. This is big," he said.

The Viva producer also made sure that the movie will have the most excellent production values. Despite the already unbeatable casting, Viva Films also tapped the tried and tested tandem of Wenn Deramas and Mel Mendoza-del Rosario to direct and write the film, respectively. The biggest movie the two have worked on was the groundbreaking "Ang Tanging Ina" and its sequel starring Ai Ai Delas Alas.

The Judy Ann-Sarah movie, working title is "Hating Kapatid," tells the story of sisters Rica and Cecilia who love each other so much that they are willing to sacrifice even their personal happiness to keep intact the bond that they share.

A romance-comedy, the movie will make viewers laugh, cry, think, wish to fall and stay, in love and realize that family members should be friends, too. Both actresses will showcase their outstanding comedic talents as well as their abilities to make people cry in this unique movie.

But the Judy Ann-Sarah ticket is not the only tandem that people await in their movie. For the first time, and hot in the heels of his critically-acclaimed performance in "In My Life," Luis Manzano will play Sarah's love interest. Also in the cast of the Judy Ann-Sarah movie is the comedian of the hour, Vice Ganda and actress par excellence Gina Pareno. ■

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.19*

Juday gives it back to Jamby: Regrets



Judy-Ann Santos

Actress Judy Ann Santos told the media during a press conference that she also regretted endorsing presidential aspirant Jamby Madrigal, who ran for a Senate seat in 2004 and won.

During the Inquirer-sponsored presidential debate held on Feb. 8, Madrigal said she regretted getting Santos to campaign for her at the time: "I have seen the folly of my ways and I will not repeat that because I don't believe that we should perpetuate lies [with the help of] a thick budget."

Santos said, "It's good that it came from her because we feel exactly the same way."

The actress said she got upset when she heard about the politician's comments. "I thought she was sincere... I thought she believed that I was an effective endorser, that I was able to convince at least three people to vote for her everywhere we went."

Santos is among the top 10 celebrity endorsers in the country, pitching for products as diverse as shampoo (Pantene), mobile phone service (Sun) and feminine wash (Lactacyd, which

was launched Monday).

She took offense at the insinuation that stars endorse politicians for nothing more, or less, than a hefty talent fee.

As for the rumor that Madrigal failed to compensate her properly for the 2004 campaign, Santos just shrugged: "I'd rather not comment on that. When it comes to money matters, it's best to talk to my manager, Alfie Lorenzo," she told the Inquirer in a one-on-one.

She said she learned a lot from this controversy. "I am more picky now... before campaigning for anyone, I'll make sure I know that person really well... from head to foot."

She said she first met Madrigal just before the 2004 election. "We did an infomercial on the youth. Since she was running [with] the party of Tatay Ron (Fernando Poe Jr.), I also campaigned for her."

She is not interested in waging a word war with Madrigal, though. "I value my name and reputation in the business," Juday said, adding that she has yet to hear from Madrigal after Feb. 8. "I have no idea if she is trying to reach me, but if she wants to... who am I to turn my back on her?"

Asked if she is endorsing a candidate this election, Juday said, "I'd rather keep that to myself or discuss it only among friends. Or maybe if I'm in the grocery and someone asks who I'd vote for, I'll be open about it. But I'd rather not campaign openly."

Her requirements? "I will vote for someone who will help the country progress, someone who can solve simple problems, like traffic."

She said that the Comelec ruling enjoining celebrities and media personalities to go on leave if they want to campaign was "slightly" unfair.

"Why single out actors? We also have the right to express our opinions and support whomever we want." ■

remain apolitical "so that whoever gets elected I would be able to sing for them."

"I have a feeling that whoever gets elected as president there would be opportunities to entertain at the Palace, which I've done for just about every president since (Ferdinand) Marcos. So, I'm hoping for that," Salonga said. When asked what she is looking for in a candidate, the singer said: "It really depends on what each candidate stands for and what they can bring to the table.... I really want to know what

they can do for our future and what they can do to propel our country forward."

"That's I'm more interested in. And if I feel that a certain candidate is the most capable and the best that we can have for the job, then that's the one that I will vote for," she said.

Meanwhile, Salonga is busy promoting "Cats," which will be shown on July 24 at the CCP Main Theater.

Salonga also bared that she might do a reunion movie with Aga Muhlach next year. ■

Dingdong afraid of Marian's dad?



Marian Rivera

Marian Rivera looked excited when the Kapuso primetime queen attended the Dinagyang Festival in Iloilo for the first time.

"Masaya, kahit pagod," she said.

She was with Darna leading man, Dennis Trillo and sidekick, Robert "Buboy" Villar during the interview, and the local press had the rare chance to talk to her. "Ang ganda pala niya talaga in person," said one local writer.

Marian's schedule is still hectic. Aside from the remaining weeks for Darna, she still does Show Me Da Manny.

Does she still have time to be with amore, Dingdong Dantes?

While she was in Iloilo, Dingdong was in Manila. The next day, Saturday, Dingdong was in Davao for an event while Marian was back in Manila. If she stayed in Iloilo for two more days, they could have been together as Dingdong attended another event in the city, also in line with the Dinagyang Festival.

But soon, their schedules would meet as they are slated to do a new soap together for GMA7. They are also appearing as guests in a concert tour headed by Regine Velasquez and Ogie Alcasid in Dubai, Canada and the US.

They also plan to visit her father in Spain. "Paalis na rin lang kami so we might as well go to Spain na rin to visit my dad," said Marian. "Medyo nagkakaroon lang ng problem sa pagkuha ni Dong ng visa to Spain."

But she just impishly smiled when asked if Dingdong had plans to ask her hand in marriage from her dad when they visit him. "Dadalaw lang po," she said, laughing.

A colleague was wondering why Dingdong is having problems in getting a visa from the Spanish embassy. "Hindi mahirap kumuha ng visa roon," he whispered. "Baka busy or ayaw lang talaga kumuha ni Dingdong (ng visa)."

"Baka takot sa daddy ni Marian?" asked another. "Baka pag naroon na sila, mapilitan na siyang pakasal kay Marian?" ■

Pops, Jomari reconciling?



Pops Fernandez

Pops Fernandez is now in good terms with ex-BF Jomari Yllana. "Nagkita na kami't nagkausap, we're okay," she says. "He even asked me to join a benefit show in Dagupan, 'di lang ako puwede. But I supported him sa launching ng Channel V nila and he even greeted me on my birthday last month."

Last year, Jom was the producer of her Valentine concert with Martin Nievera. Now, her show with Martin at SMX MOA, "One Amore Time," will be up against Jom's own Valentine show with Kuh Ledesma at Mandarin.

"Oo nga, singer na rin siya after 'Celebrity Duets'," she says. "Okay lang. The market is big for all of us who'll have Valentine shows."

Jom's business partner, Ronald Singson, is being linked to Lovi Poe. What's the real score between the two? "I see them together but I don't ask personal questions about them," Jom says. "Nothing wrong if they're dating kasi binata naman si Ronald. He's not married to anyone."

Going back to Pops, she admits doing a kissing scene with Martin in Tagaytay on a VTR to be shown in their concert. "The producer, Mae Dolonius, wants to project us as mature performers doing sexier production numbers, including the VTR, so we agreed to do it."

Will they also do it live on stage? "We'll just let the moment tell us what to do," she says. "Bahala na." ■

Lea Salonga to remain apolitical



Lea Salonga

International artist Lea Salonga has clarified that she is not endorsing any political candidate amid speculation that she is supporting

Liberal Party standard-bearer Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

Salonga has been identified with Noynoy ever since she sang "Bayan Ko" during the funeral of the presidential candidate's mother, former president Corazon "Cory" Aquino.

The world-renowned singer, however, said she is still undecided. She also explained that she performed the song "because the Aquino family was very gracious in asking me to sing it."

"As much as it's (Bayan Ko) identified with me now, it's really the personal anthem of Tita Cory, of Corazon Aquino. And I sang it because I was asked by her family to sing that particular song. And Kris, that was the one song she wanted for me to sing. So, if it's identified with me, it's only because the Aquino family was very gracious in asking me to sing it," Salonga said.

Salonga stressed that she would

John Lloyd & Bea: A love team for all seasons, for all reasons



Bea Alonzo & John Lloyd Cruz

Fate brings them together...Fate tears them apart...Will faith in love be strong enough to keep them together?

The blurb for their latest movie, Star Cinema's Miss You Like Crazy, might as well be the testimony to the loveteam of John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo who have been brought together by fate and been seemingly sealed together by fate.

As in the case of such immortal loveteams as Carmen Rosales and Rogelio dela Rosa, Nida Blanca and Nestor de Villa, Gloria Romero and Luis Gonzales, Susan Roces and Eddie Gutierrez, Vilma Santos and Christopher de Leon, there's no romantic love but only pure friendship between John Lloyd and Bea off camera, and yet their loveteam ticks and clicks because on the screen, they seem so real and so true, and that's all that matters.

You can't help but fall in love with them, whether on the small screen where their love started to bloom or on the big screen where it continues to flourish. Theirs is a loveteam for all seasons, for all reasons.

Bea was only 14 when she was paired with John Lloyd in the ABS-CBN soap Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay, with Lorna Tolentino among their co-stars, followed by a few more including Maging Sino Ka Man Books 1 and 2 and I Love Betty La Fea. Before Miss You Like Crazy, they starred in three movies, all for Star Cinema, namely Close to You, Now That I Have You and One More Chance.

They have been paired with other partners, Bea with Piolo Pascual and others and John Lloyd with Sarah Geronimo and others, but their fans clamor for more of them together. That's why the title of their new starrer is really apt. Their fans miss John Lloyd and Bea like crazy.

Directed by Cathy Garcia-Molina, Miss You Like Crazy will surely rekindle in moviegoers the same beautiful feeling nurtured by previous John Lloyd-Bea starrers.

"I'm happy to be working with direk Cathy again," said John Lloyd.

"Direk Cathy knows very well John Lloyd and my working habits," said Bea. "Sanay na kami sa isa't-isa."

Also starring Maricar Reyes, Miss You Like Crazy is direk Cathy's first project since she lost her husband in a freak biking accident in Baguio City last year.

In the story, John Lloyd and Maricar play sweethearts until Bea, while on holiday from her work as a hotel front-desk officer in Kuala Lumpur, comes into the picture. Bea and John Lloyd meet and match, only for fate to step in and bring them apart. Then they meet again, only for John Lloyd to find out that it isn't possible for their love story to start all over again because fate is playing tricks on them. But then, true love triumphs in the end somehow. ■



Derek Ramsay & Angelica Panganiban

Derek Ramsay's love for actress Angelica Panganiban is 100% real. You can tell by the way he holds her hands, looks into her eyes, and talks to her in hushed tones, as if they were in their own little world and there were no one else in it but them. "When I'm out and I'm with her, I don't care if people are looking. I definitely like to show my affection. It's the same with her. We're not embarrassed or shy about it," Derek casually states.

The handsome couple graces the special back-to-back cover of Cosmopolitan magazine's February issue, where they divulge private details of their much-publicized love. In Derek's interview with Cosmo.ph, the online home of Cosmopolitan, more details of their three-year relationship are revealed.

The moreno hunk admits that working with Angel in their first joint movie project, I Love You Goodbye, was "very hard and very uncomfortable. I'm used to seeing Angel in a certain way. That's why I say it's her best performance to date because when the director says action, it's like I'm talking to

a totally different person. It's just really weird. And the kissing scenes, the bed scenes, I thought it'd be so much easier, but we both found it a lot harder," he recalls.

The Habang May Buhay star is proud to say that he doesn't get jealous, even though the Rubi leading lady has bared her skin in men's magazines, and has shared intimate scenes with other actors. "It's not a problem for me. There's no emotion, it's just all physical."

A vital factor that has made their bond last through all the wear and tear that come with being a celebrity couple is trust. "When you don't trust someone, that's when you can get jealous. With me, I give her 100% trust. She can go to a party, guys can go flirt with her, and I'm sure she'll handle her business. It's the same with me: if girls flirt with me, I'll handle my business. At the end of the night, [Angel and I] will go home together," Derek relates.

This rock-solid trust prevails even in the face of the nastiest showbiz rumors, the worst of which is a report that claims Angel broke up with Derek because she found a used condom in his car! When asked how he handles such gossip, Derek replies, "Just in one ear and out the other. When you know the truth, why make patrol?"

A lot has been said about Derek and Angel's seven-year age gap, but the 30-year-old actor is unfazed by such comments. "It takes a lot of understanding on my part that she's only 23. But what people don't know about Angel is she's very mature for her age. She's been the breadwinner and she's been in the industry for 16 years. She's been working ever since she was a child. So, her maturity level is way up there. I didn't start working 'til I was about [her] age now...She knows more about that aspect of life than me," Derek says admiringly of his lady love. ■

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all about Home Business
by: Jean Janete Aguilar

**No more excuses
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What are the common excuses? I don't have enough time to... I don't have enough money for... I'm going to start but I just have to... and I would rather stay within my comfort zone than... It's time to face reality and stop the loser in you

All of us have this silly excuses that we are too busy and don't have the time to do this and that. In real estate investing for example, we don't consistently analyze properties. We lose sight that real estate investing is a numbers game and the more properties we analyze, the more chances we have of getting that one deal out of a hundred that's worth investing in. You can hear that voice inside of you say "But I don't have time to analyze a bunch of properties, I'm just too busy...". Do you really lack the time or maybe you are just not willing to make time?

How about the money for down payment, repairs, etc. That loser inside of you says "You don't have enough money!" but have you really tried to manage your money and see where all your money is going? Have you really taken steps to ensure that you are consistently building your financial freedom account along with the other "money jars" needed to effectively manage your money?

You want to start to do something worthwhile but then again, that loser inside of you says "Stop... let's wait until the timing is just right" and all that crap. It's just like waiting for all the stop lights on the road to turn green before starting to move. Good luck!

That voice of the loser inside may also say "Why should you even bother doing something that's way out of your comfort zone..." and instead convinces you to just endure a comfortable life which is often synonymous to a tolerable but often meaningless existence. Maybe it's time you realized that no one became ultra successful by living a comfortable life. If that was true then those millions of people who do nothing but watch TV all day would have become rich and successful by now.. ouch!

Focus on the winner inside of you! Maybe we should all stop listening to the loser inside of us that never runs out of excuses and holds us back from becoming successful real estate investors! Don't you think it's about time that we focused on listening to the voice inside of us who actually says how we can we make things work, the winner inside of us?

It's that winner inside of us that would realize that one needs to make time instead of complaining that we don't have enough time for real estate investing. The winner inside of us discerns what things are truly important and worth doing and helps us find the time we need no matter how "busy" we are and then this allows us to consistently look at properties and analyze them as it would really take about a hundred properties before finding that one gem of a deal.

It's also that winner inside of us that somehow finds creative ways of financing those great real estate deals that we may find even if the loser inside us says we don't have enough money.

Lastly, that same winner inside of us will also coax us out of our comfort zones and make things happen to achieve financial freedom in spite of a little discomfort that we may experience along the way.

While I have said in the past

that it would be great to buy a house and treat it as an investment, I want to take it a step further. What if instead of buying a house outright, one would first buy an income generating asset that would generate positive cash flow and help take care of the monthly amortizations of the house that one would then buy afterwards?

Last month I mentioned this idea to my partner and I said "Wouldn't it be a great idea to buy an investment property that would be able to pay for the monthly amortizations of the house that we intend to live in every time we go back to the Philippines for a short vacation?"

At least that's the way I look at it. My purpose for making money through property investing is not really about having lots of money or getting rich, its about having the freedom to do

soon as possible and achieve financial freedom, with more than enough money in the form of passive income to sustain us without the need for a job.

Money may not be everything but money absolutely affects everything that we hold dear in life. I often hear people say that money is not important as they believe that happiness and family is more important. If you think about it, how the heck can you be happy if you don't have the money to help/support your family?

Life is short and I want to make the most of my life by living life to the fullest now, while I am at the prime of my life, not when I am sixty or seventy years old. The inside of me would often say that what I'm saying is impossible and we have no choice but to work hard, guess what, these words often become a self fulfilling prophecy. I for one know for a fact that it can be done because I am doing it right now, which is what I am sharing to all of you through this article about the property invested in the Philippines with the help of my sister who represent me in all of my transactions.

Happiness does not have to be deferred. It just takes courage to act. Five years ago I gave myself a deadline and said to myself that I shall have financial freedom on or before 2010. Guess what, I became a home-based business entrepreneur last year and became a unit owner of a beautiful condominium, just today (February 8, 2010) as I was seated in front of my computer writing this article, yipeey!. I invested in a property that is strategically located at the center of Manila (I intend to put it on for a short-term lease to tourist or professionals who need a place to stay in Manila in a homely /hotel style) .

So far I am on track with my goals, I have already a business at home, a stable part-time job and a proud unit owner of a prestigious The



I made it! I am now a proud investor in the Philippines - Jeanette

the things that are truly most important in life, without worrying about where to get money to provide for my family. I have a ten-year old daughter who is growing rapidly right before my eyes and I would rather be a mother that is always there for her than one who is always working hard somewhere,

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confined to having weekends and short vacations as free time to spend with my family. I tell you, spending the best years of your life "working hard" is not worth it when you realize that life is really passing you by.

The past decade of hard working has made me realize this, where earning a "living" is actually causing too much stress and boredom. I made a decision that I will get out of the so called rat-race as

Grand Towers in Malate Manila (www.thegrandtowers.com) and most of all my family are all doing well and in good health., thank God!!! That simply makes me look forward to what lies ahead and it gives the saying "Life begins at 40." a whole new meaning for me! --- from Jeanette Aguilar I would like to express my gratitude to the ff; Ate May Dylon & Ms Annie Miaral-for opening my door in Montreal; Ms Zeny Kharroubi & Linda

Odulio for encouraging me to get out from my shell. For Abigail, Carlos, my sisters and brothers who are always there for me anytime I needed them and to my Dad who passed away last Dec. 16, 2009. My only father whom I neglected for so many years - whatever I accomplished in life is because he made me a stronger person in facing challenges in life. Thank you Dad! ■



My Dad is a Broke OFW (An open letter to all OFW's by Trace Trajano)

Kumusta na kabayan! First, I would like to thank you for being an OFW. My dad used to be an OFW and I know the many sacrifices you are enduring right now just so that you can provide the best for your family. I admire you, I appreciate you and in my book, you are a true Pinoy hero.

Second, I would like to share with you the story and to understand how my dad, an OFW like you became broke.

I've experienced as a child what I call a roller coaster of wealth. In Tagalog, we call this "Gulong ng Palad" (Wheel of Fortune) because there are times we're on top of the world and there are times we're at the bottom. When my dad comes back from abroad it is like a fiesta. The alcohol is overflowing. The whole town seems to be at our door step and my dad's pasalubongs never seem to run out. Packets of cigarette. Bottles of whisky. Chocolates for the kids. Jewelry for my mom. It is like we're millionaires every time my dad xomwa home.

But we're millionaires only for a short time.

Two weeks later, the money's gone. My mom and dad start to argue. And my dad seriously considers going back to the ship. He borrowed money from his in-laws and 5/6 from "bumbay". One time, my mom and dad even asked me to borrow money from my Lola because both of them were already turned down. I guess that tactic worked because Lola couldn't say NO to his apo and we ate dinner that night.

Then things turned for the worse. The many friends who cheerfully greeted my dad's homecoming were no longer around. Instead, creditors started hounding us, pounding at our door. At 8 years old, I was taught to lie and tell the creditor my mom is not around even though she is just there beside me kneeling and praying for the creditor to go away.

From feeling like millionaires for a few days to being dead broke 2 weeks later - describing it as a roller coaster or a wheel of fortune is an understatement. My mom and dad managed to squander all their savings and more.

So 2 months later, my dad was back at the airport again. We had tears in our eyes once again as we bid him goodbye. My dad would have to work hard on a ship 10 months in a year mostly to pay off our greedy lenders and creditors.

My dad tried to invest - buying a tricycle but the business became bankrupt as fast as it was started. My dad recalled that tricycle with pride in his voice "It was the first stainless steel tricycle in our town". He was proud of the product but he and

my mom did not take the time to understand the business.

There were many days our home is literally dark because we couldn't pay for the electric bill. Once, as a 9-year old boy, I was devastated when I saw my books have been sold so that we will have food on the table that day. Then the worst happened: we lost our home to foreclosure because there was no money left to pay for the mortgage.

Is the story above familiar to you? I bet coz I know many OFWs who have the same lifestyle cycle as my dad. Rich one day then broke the next day.

Have you discovered the Secrets to Wealth in my dad's story? At its core, it really is very simple. You will be wealthy if you do the exact opposite of what my dad did.

Don't waste your money by throwing a lavish home coming party for the whole town - SAVE your money instead. Have a small gathering with your family and loved ones. Your partner, children, parent, sisters and brothers will appreciate it more because they want your presence more than your presents and they'll be more proud if you become successful. Get into the habit of saving at least 10-20% of everything you earn. The earlier you get that habit the wealthier you will become or the faster you will reach that financial freedom..

For ideas on where to find and how to make income on foreclosed property in the Philippines, contact me at jecahp@gmail.com. Its good to invest in your country, you're not only making your dreams come true, you will also make your family proud of you while you are contributing in repairing our Philippines economy. And most of all, make the most out of being the true (BBB) Bagong bayani ng Bayan. Salamat! ■

Tips for creating an effective budget

Budgeting 101:

(NC)—You don't need to be a math or economics whiz to create an effective budget. It does require some time, motivation, effort, and follow-through, but once you've created your budget and gained some financial peace of mind, you'll probably find it was well worth it.

qFollow these steps to create an effective budget:

- Use a worksheet. It doesn't have to be fancy and there are some good examples available online. Try visiting moneymart.ca/budgeting for a free download of their worksheet.
- Get your paperwork together. Take the time to find pay stubs, bank statements, utility bills, auto and renter's insurance bills, and any other paperwork that can help you determine your income and expenses.
- Enter your income and expenses. Refer to the documentation you gathered and enter your monthly income into your budget.
- Adjust your expenses, if necessary. Total your income and expenses -- hopefully, you'll find that your income is higher. If so, decide what to do with your extra income, whether it's putting

more money into savings or paying off a credit card. If your expenses are higher, decide which expenses you can lower, if not eliminate.

- If you're still finding it next to impossible to control your spending, try using a prepaid credit card such as the one offered by Money Mart. Because it's prepaid, it automatically has a built-in spending limit set by how much money is loaded to the account. It's a great way to control and reduce your spending habits.

Review Your Budget Each Month

Once you've completed the steps outlined above, you've successfully created your budget. However, your work isn't quite done. Revisit your budget each month to see if you've stayed on track or if you need to make further adjustments.

More information on this topic is available online at www.moneymart.ca. www.newscanada.com ■

Four tax savings tips for young professionals

(NC)—You're new to the workforce and tax planning may be all new to you. RBC suggests the following tax planning techniques, which may yield tax savings:

If you make an RRSP contribution this year, you don't have to claim it on your tax return for that year. You can use Schedule 7 to carry forward your RRSP tax deduction to a



future year, when you are earning more and in a higher tax bracket, to maximize your tax reduction.

In addition to RRSP contributions, you will receive a tax credit by making a charitable donation for as little as \$20, providing another way you can reduce the personal tax you pay.

Consider a Tax-Free Savings Account where your money grows tax-free, up to \$5,000 per year. Also, unused contribution room can be carried forward to future years and any money withdrawn will be added to unused contribution room so you can re-contribute that money starting the following year.

Get next year's tax refund early. If you normally get a tax refund, you should consider applying to the Canada Revenue Agency on CRA Form T1213 for a waiver to have your employer reduce your taxes withheld at source from your paycheque. Quebec residents should also use Revenue Quebec's Form TP-1016.

www.newscanada.com

The countdown to retirement

(NC)—The five years leading up to retirement is a unique time for many Canadians. Being prepared is the best way to achieve your goals and now is the time to get started.



"While there is considerable freedom with retirement, life can also throw us curve balls," says Lee Anne Davies, head, Retirement Strategies, RBC. "There are unexpected life events and circumstances such as changes to relationships, your finances and your health."

Here are some life events you may need to consider:

Family

Spending additional time with your family or supporting them in adulthood might also mean additional expenses. Have you thought about the type of help and support you may want or need to give to family members?

Lifestyle

The ability to achieve your chosen lifestyle in retirement is generally considered a key indicator of your readiness to retire. Have you considered that you may have many lifestyle changes through your retirement years?

Health

Your personal health can effect your enjoyment of your retirement. Have you thought about how your health will affect your retirement decisions?

Returning to work

Retirees are returning to the workforce, achieving more work flexibility and enjoyment. Have you considered what returning to work might look like for you after you retire?

Mind and Spirit

Personal growth and ongoing contributions are important to our sense of self-worth. How will you stay engaged in your retirement?

"The starting point for successful retirement planning is not the 'magic number'," says Ms. Davies. "It's asking people what they care about. Once you figure out what retirement will look like for you and you plan for the unexpected, the numbers are the easy part."

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Nursing Aide (PAB/PSW) Class 2009 pose with their teachers, Amy Manon-og, Josie Toledo, and Director General Zenaida Kharroubi. Not in photo are Ms. Clarice Mackay and Ms. Terry White.

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