

JAN-FEBRUARY 2014

Donors needed for Population Control

MANILA, Philippines - The Philippines may have to rely on donations to manage its population which is seen to hit 100 million this year, a health official said.

Health Undersecretary Janet Garin said this is primarily due to the reduction in the Department of Health (DOH)'s budget for the purchase of contraceptives.

Garin said when the Senate ratified last month the bicameral conference committee report on the proposed P2.265-trillion budget for 2014, P304 million was removed from the DOH budget for contraceptive pills.

She said the budget is supposed to be used to implement the Reproductive Health Law whose implementation has been stalled due to a temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by the Supreme Court.

Garin admitted that the budget cut will have an impact on the DOH's reproductive health programs which include family planning, oral care and maternal and child health care.

She, however, said they remain hopeful that with the cooperation of the public and local government units (LGUs), they will be able to overcome this concern.

Donors to fill gap

Garin also expressed hope that donors would be able to fill the gap in contraceptive supplies.

"Somehow, there will be a problem

DONORS
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The Swimsuit is Back...

IN A BEAUTY PAGEANT, THAT IS - Contestant Alison Mae Intal Garcia shows her poise during the swimsuit competition portion of the recently concluded Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 pageant. See story inside to see who won the pageant.



Courtesy Call



Senate President Drilon receives first Fil-Canadian Senator. Senate President Franklin Drilon receives Canadian senator Tobias Enverga Jr. along with his wife Rosemer during his courtesy call at the Senate on Monday, January 20. Enverga, who was born in the Philippines, is a member of the Senate of Canada representing Ontario, and is the first person of Filipino-descent to hold the position. (PRIB photo by Cesar Tomambo)

Pnoy welcomes winter 'escapees'

MANILA, Philippines—They traded the bitterly cold winter for a relatively mild chilly weather.

Two hundred forty Filipino-Canadians had plenty of sun, sand and sea during their six-day visit—from Jan. 18 to 23—to the islands of Panay and Guimaras, which, like the rest of the country, are experiencing

ESCAPEES
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Pacquiao-Bradley Rematch is On

Pacquiao's loss to Bradley on June 9, 2012, broke a 15-fight winning streak during which he was recognized as one of the best pound-for-pound boxers in the world along with Floyd Mayweather.

Later that year, Juan Manuel Marquez knocked out Pacquiao, making many think that Pacquiao's age and outside-the-ring activities- he's a congressman in the



Philippines, does extensive charity work and moonlights as an actor and singer - had hurt his ability to box at a high level.

In November,

Pacquiao, 35, defeated Brandon Rios in a comeback fight in Macau.

Bradley, 30, defended his welterweight championship twice since beating Pacquiao: a brutal brawl with Ruslan Provodnikov and a close decision over Marquez.

Bradley abandoned his defensive style against Provodnikov and left the ring swollen and with a concussion. Bradley said he slurred his speech for two months after the fight. Against Marquez, Bradley used his boxing skills to avoid the power that had caught Pacquiao, and won another close decision.

Promoters Bob Arum and Todd duBoef of Top Rank and Michael Koncz of MP Promotions announced the fight, which will be held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas and will be distributed by HBO Pay-Per-View.

Japan soldier who hid in PH jungle for 30 yrs, dies

TOKYO - A Japanese soldier who hid in the Philippine jungle for three decades because he did not believe World War II was over, has died in Tokyo aged 91.

Hiroo Onoda waged a guerilla campaign in Lubang Island near Luzon until he was finally persuaded in 1974 that peace had broken out.

Leaflet drops and other efforts to convince him the Imperial Army had been defeated were unsuccessful, and it was only a visit from his former commanding officer, who ordered him to lay down his arms, that brought an end to his war.

Onoda was the last of several dozen so-called holdouts scattered around Asia, men who symbolized the astonishing perseverance of those called upon to fight for their emperor.

Trained as an information officer and guerrilla tactics coach, Onoda was dispatched to Lubang in 1944 and ordered never to surrender, never to resort to suicidal attacks and to hold firm until reinforcements arrived.

He and three other soldiers held firm to that order long after Japan's 1945 defeat.

Their existence in the Philippines became widely known in 1950, after one of them emerged and returned to Japan.

The remaining men continued to survey area military facilities, attacking local residents and occasionally fight with Philippine forces.

One of them died in the 1950s.

Tokyo and Manila searched for the



remaining two over the next decade, but ruled in 1959 that they were already dead.

However, in 1972, Onoda and the other soldier got involved in a shoot-out with local troops. His comrade died, but Onoda managed to escape.

The incident shocked Japan, which took his family members to Lubang in the hope of persuading him that hostilities were over.

Onoda later explained that he had believed attempts to coax him out were the work of a puppet regime installed in Tokyo by the United States.

It was not until 1974 when his old commanding officer visited him at his jungle hideout and rescinded the original order that Onoda's war eventually ended.

Ate Vi to Toni: 'Bakit mo binasted ang anak ko?'

Toni Gonzaga was caught off guard by Gov. Vilma Santos query on the former's almost-romantic involvement with Luis Manzano in the past.

Toni was filling in for Luis as guest host on "Minute To Win It" - with the actor-TV host stepping in at the game show's 60-minute circle as a contestant during its New Year episode - when Gov. Vi put her on the hot seat.

The 60-year-old multi-awarded actress was wishing her son luck in a surprise phone interview, when she suddenly turned to Toni and blurted, "Bakit mo binasted ang anak ko?," eliciting cheers from the studio audience.

Without missing a beat, Vilma continued, "Toni, are you listening? Alam mo nung nililigawan ka ni Lucky, tapos binasted mo siya, alam mo bang masyadong naapektuhan ang anak ko?"

Toni, who was seemingly at a loss for words, answered, "Naku! Pasensya na po kayo, hindi ko sinasadya! Bata pa po ako noon!"

Gov. Vi playfully pressed, "Eh, papaano ngayon, mature ka na?"

The veteran actress touted Star for All Seasons eventually pointed out that Toni is "unfortunately taken," by her longtime boyfriend, filmmaker Paul Soriano.

Luis, in a 2012 interview, admitted that he courted the 29-year-old actress-TV host during their "Crazy For You" days, his first acting stint with Toni in 2006, before teaming up in several Kapamilya projects as co-hosts and co-actors ("This Guy's In Love With You Mare").

In the special episode of "Minute To Win It" aired Friday, Luis went on to win P500,000 for the benefit of the typhoon "Yolanda" survivors.





Naku HA! by Jose Baking
LMConfidential.com

What happened to Global Warming?

If you have not heard or seen Al Gore lately, it's probably because he is in some warm climate hiding from this polar vortex of a winter weather we are getting while we freeze our buns off because we cannot afford to take time off to hightail it to some tropical paradise. What happened to global warming that everyone was talking about? Anybody or wannabe somebody all said that it was bad for the environment and will bring doomsday to the world. But everybody else did not believe them. Everybody else enjoyed warm winters. Bring back global warming. The only people who are going to benefit from these frigid temperatures are hydro companies, road construction companies, manufacturers of ice wine, heating, winter clothing, blankets, thermal underwear among the few.

Why China did not give more?

With the pork barrel issue being buried by disaster stories, is it wrong to ask "with all that money the government has, why is it not being used for recovery operations after every disaster?" If it has been diverted to politician's pockets, why not divert it again to help the people? Can you blame China for just giving \$100,000? It is either they know the victims will not get it or it might be used to buy arms, ships, ammunitions, aircrafts to fight them. We all know that China has been flexing it's muscles, even encroaching on our territory, right? Or has everyone forgotten that too? The other countries can afford to give big because they are not having a "war" with the Philippines. Not to mention, the money they are giving is a drop in the bucket for from their budget but big enough to put the disaster areas -past and present maybe - back to normal. That is, if all the money really go to the disaster areas and the victims.

Will you follow blindly?

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau admitted to smoking dope and everybody falls asleep. Seeing that there is no backlash, the other politicians follow suit. Mayor Rob Ford is seen smoking an unknown substance and everybody is going berserk. Besides what charge can you file against any of them anyway? As for them being bad examples, who really follows lemmings if they jump over a cliff anyway? Jung tumalon ba sila sa tulay, susunod ka rin?

Why quality goes down?

I do not like Buko Pandan and Avocado flavours of Magnolia ice cream being sold in Toronto groceries. I like the Halo-Halo flavour of Magnolia though. Queso flavour of Sorbetero

brand is fine. However, when I bought Sorbetero Queso ice cream again, the texture changed. it is not the same creamy smooth texture that I bought before. In fact, it feels like snow. I am not the only one who noticed it. At Flor Vendiola's wake, I met a guy who also noticed the difference. Why can't Philippine products maintain their quality? Why do they think that we will not notice it? Hay buhay. Just when you thought you found one product you like, they ruin it.

Rob Ford speaks Patois

Another video of Rob Ford came out again speaking in a foreign language under the influence of alcohol. It made front page news again. Apparently, he was swearing but a language professor defended it as how we speak between friends. If you were speaking at council chamber or high society, it will be vulgar. Because Ford got the attention agian, Justin Bieber's publicist decided that Justin had to do something stupid to get the attention back. That is why he drove his Lamborghini while drunk.

They cannot make up their mind

Even Mayor Rob Ford's opponent in council Adam Vaughan is getting tired of them. I am talking of John Tory and Olivia Chow. While Rob Ford keeps his high ratings by getting drunk, these two keep staying in the news by not declaring if they will run for Mayor or not. Unfortunatelly for them, this kind of news is getting tiresome while Rob Ford's antics is jsut entertaining the public who keep giving him high ratings whenever a survey is done after his shenanigans. Ford has it easy.

VALENTINE'S SHOW CANADIAN TOUR 2014

Celebrate your love with
True Faith, Wency Cornejo

Let love songs warm your hearts during True Faith and Wency Cornejo's Valentine's Show Canadian Tour in Toronto 2014 on Feb. 22, Saturday at the Global Kingdom Ministries, at 1250 Markham Rd., Scarborough, Toronto. The serenade will start at 5 p.m.

Truefaith and Wency are coming from Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver as part of their Canadian Tour and will head to Montreal after Toronto.

Filipino band True Faith, one of the most popular and accomplished easy-listening bands in the Philippines, brings a repertoire of romantic hit songs Perfect, Awit Para sa Kanya (Song for Her), one-acoustic guitar ballad Kung OK lang Sa 'Yo (If it's Ok with You), Sumasarap ang Gising (Waking Up is GettingSweeter) and Dedma (I don't care), among others.

Wency Cornejo, meanwhile, who has launched a solo career after his band days with After Image, will croon lovebirds with popular hits like Habang May Buhay (While There's Life), Forevermore, Without You, You Made Me Believe, etc.

The song artists are scheduled to hold a press conference, meet and greet with prime ticket holders and sponsors night on Feb. 21. They are also set to visit several Filipino establishments in Toronto. Details on the time and venue will be announced later.

The Canadian tour will continue with Spectacle de la Saint Valentin in Montreal on Feb. 23 at the Oscar Peterson Concert Hall, at the Concordia University Loyola Campus. Doors will open at 3 p.m.

This won't be the first time for True Faith and Cornejo to entertain Filipino-Canadians. Their past performances had been marked with warm welcome and success prompting their return to the Canadian stage. They promise an evening filled with love for their fans, engagement and entertainment.

Concert organizers Pinoy Times Entertainment and Benchmark Management Group are holding an early bird promo survey that will give concert-goers 10% off their ticket purchases until Jan. 31, 2014. Those willing to answer a short survey will automatically get the discounted price on their purchase.

Giving more entertainment value are local Toronto talents LCPD, Uppercase, Inah Patrizia, Partida and Kate Jose and the JDL performers. In Montreal, the added entertainment will be given by bands Addictive Remedy, Frozen Flame and Kontrapelo.

Tickets are at \$95 (reserved seats and includes meet and greet with the artists on Feb. 21, Friday), \$65 (mid section on first come, first served basis), and \$45 (general admission on first come, first served basis).

Tickets for the Toronto concert are available at J&J Ent and Bon Bon at the Oriental Centre at Sheppard and Brimley; FV Foods outlets at Lawrence and Warden, Bathurst and Wilson and Mississauga; Cusina Lounge at Bathurst and Wilson; and Manila Bakery at 20 Ceremonial Drive, Mississauga. Tickets may also be purchased online at www.ticketgateway.com or call 1-877-616-0101.

Event organizers wish to thank the presenting sponsor TFC The Filipino Channel, major concert sponsors Ria Money Transfer, Cuisine Sante, Kubo Magazine, FV Foods and Cusina Lounge, Souvlaki George and Marc Cortez and partners JDL Performing Arts, Action Honda, FilCore Support Group and Radio Insect Records and all the media partners.

Cheryl Cantonjos, of BMG, said those who have inquiries regarding sponsorship and tickets may reach her at phone nos. 647-962-2002 or send her an e-mail at ccantonjos@gmail.com.*

MEDIA: PRESS CONFERENCE: Friday, Feb 21, 2014 - Delta Toronto East - 6:00-7:00 pm (2035 Kennedy Rd, Scarborough, ON M1T 3G2)

Best Regards,
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Scene in the City



ABOVE , Diamonds by Josie de Leon School of Performing Arts is busy rehearsing for their appearance at Charice Pempengco's World Tour concert on March 29 at Global Ministries Church.

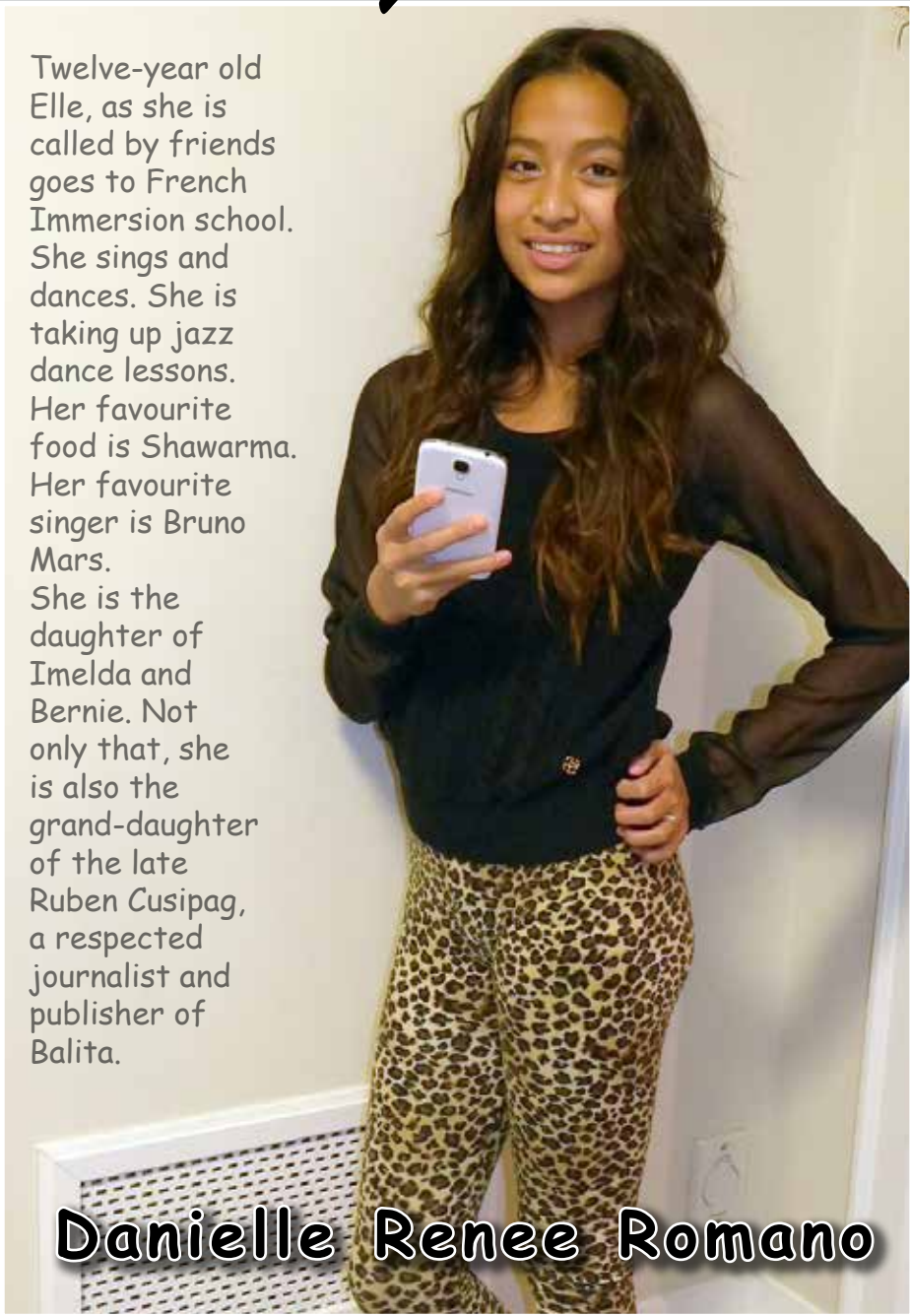
LAUGH
RESORT

Wife to grant Wish
After being married for 50 years, I took a careful look at my wife one day and said, "Fifty years ago we had a cheap house, a junk car, slept on a sofa bed and watched a 10-inch black and white TV, but I got to sleep with a hot 23-year-old girl every night.
Now, I have a \$500,000 home, a \$45,000 car, a nice big bed and a large screen TV, but I'm sleeping with a 69-year-old woman. It seems to me that you're not holding up your side of things."
My wife is a very reasonable woman. She told me to go out and find a hot 23-year-old girl and she would make sure that I would once again be living in a cheap house, driving a junk car, sleeping on a sofa bed and watching a 10-inch black and white TV.

Anak ni Pacman
JINKY: Manny, pagmagkaka-anak uli tayo, ano mgandang name?
MANNY: E di, combine na lng name ntin.. 'manky'.
ALING DIONISIA: Aba, kailangan ksali rin pangalan ko!
MANNY: Naku, midyo mahirap yun nay.
ALING DIONISIA: Hindi ah, may naesep na nga ako eh.
MANNY: Talaga Nay? Anu?
ALING DIONISIA: Diomanjil!

Honey Shot

Twelve-year old Elle, as she is called by friends goes to French Immersion school. She sings and dances. She is taking up jazz dance lessons. Her favourite food is Shawarma. Her favourite singer is Bruno Mars. She is the daughter of Imelda and Bernie. Not only that, she is also the grand-daughter of the late Ruben Cusipag, a respected journalist and publisher of Balita.



Danielle Renee Romano

Heart gets
diamond ring but
not yet engaged

Kapuso actress Heart Evangelista is not engaged to her boyfriend, Senator Chiz Escudero, contrary to talk ignited by a photo of a diamond ring captioned "life changing trip" which was posted on Instagram recently.
Heart clarified that she got the ring during her vacation with Escudero and his family and her friends, and that it's not an engagement ring.
"It was fun kasi kasama ko si Chiz saka 'yung buong family niya... It was very nice, refreshing. Beach, ganu'n, tapos pati 'yung mga kaibigan ko, nakasama ko din," the 28-year-old actress said in an interview aired on "24 Oras," Friday.
She said that should they decide to get engaged, they themselves would announce it since it's something to be "celebrated."
"Hindi dapat tinatago 'yung mga ganyan so wala, wala pa talaga."
She said that Escudero is the only man she'd like to spend the rest of her life with.
"I've never felt this way before," she declared.
Heart and Chiz have long been awaited to tie the knot especially when they started counting years in their relationship. There have been rumors that they've already exchanged vows but the two have flatly denied it.
Aside from headlining the series "Magkano Ba Ang Pag-Ibig?" and her regular stint on "Sunday All Stars," Heart co-hosts "iBilib" with Chris Tiu.



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Pandesal eases homesickness



PINOY BUNS Light and salty pandesal is standard Pinoy breakfast fare. Inset: Prime Obon-Laput and her husband Edmund, posing with their daughter, are making sure overseas Pinoys in Thailand still get their daily pandesal.

PHITSANULOK, Thailand—Filipinos abroad miss many things from the Philippines, from “balut” to San Miguel Beer. But overseas Filipino workers and their families in Phitsanulok have a taste of home thanks to a Filipino teacher here who ventured into baking the most sought-after bread by fellow Pinoys: the light and salty breakfast bun, pandesal.

Prime Obon-Laput, 33, a college instructor at Phitsanulok College and her husband Edmund, also a teacher at Padoongrasda School, ventured into the small-scale Pinoy bakery, to augment their income as teachers.

“At first, we just wanted to make pandesal for our own consumption, but most of our friends requested us to sell

the pandesal,” Prime says.

A family business

Back in the Philippines, Prime’s family owned a bakery—La Prima Bakery in Sariaya, Quezon. When her father came to Thailand in 2011, Edmund

asked him to teach them how to bake pandesal for their own consumption.

“Pandesal is very much a part of a Filipino’s breakfast. We missed it here, so my husband wanted to learn how to bake it,” Prime recalls.

At that time, they didn’t have an oven, so they waited until 2013, during Prime’s father’s third visit in Thailand to teach Edmund how to bake.

On September 2013, Prime and Edmund started baking pandesal. Their friends who got a taste of it wanted more. So they decided to bake more for sale. Every Wednesday and Friday they bake pandesal.

Aside from pandesal, the husband and wife team also bake pan de coco and Spanish bread, both Filipino favorites. They also bake cakes on a per order basis.

Actually, baking pandesal is a “labor of love” for Prime and Edmund.

“We are not making that much profit, we just want to give our fellow OFWs a taste of home,” Prime explains.

As of now, they only cater to fellow OFWs, since they have limited time to bake due to their full time work. But in due time, they are planning to sell their bakery products to Thai people.

Online sales

To sell their products, Prime and Edmund use the social media site Facebook to advertise and collect orders.

“It’s very effective. People can see the pictures of our pandesal and other bakery goods. I also post the time of availability. FB friends then place their orders through Facebook.” Prime explains.

Labor of love

“The primary reason we bake is for our kababayan here to at least have a ‘taste of home’ through our products. We only bake bread during our free hours since we both have full-time teaching jobs,” says Prime. The two also have a daughter.

“We cannot really venture into this business, as a sole source of income.

Yes, we do get some profit but it is really exhausting. Still, we continue to bake because we both find satisfaction in baking (we both love cooking and experimenting on foods).

“It is also an avenue for us to meet friends, to see each other when they pick up their orders. We have little chats with them, how they have been doing, etc... It’s not only about the money that we can earn but the joy of knowing that every bite reminds them of the Philippines and somehow eases out their homesickness. That’s profit enough for us,” Prime ends.



Gwen Zamora visits Tacloban; says survivors are “warriors”

Kapuso actress Gwen Zamora may be a convincing villain on-screen but very few are aware of how big Gwen’s heart is in real life. As a matter of fact, instead of taking a vacation last December, the Filipina-Italian actress chose to spend her Christmas in Tacloban.

“For Christmas, nag-Tacloban kami ng parents ko with my boyfriend and his family,” she shared.

Her boyfriend, Raymond Romualdez is the son of the mayor of Tacloban, Mayor Alfred Romualdez. Being a supportive girlfriend, she immediately gave her helping hand after Typhoon Yolanda’s onslaught.

“It was my parents first time to go, so ipinakita namin where things used to be. And we brought them there.”

Gwen admires the resiliency of the people in Tacloban.

“The Taclobanos are very strong warriors!” she proudly told GMA Network.com.

Gwen also shared that she’s very thankful that things are getting normal in Tacloban.

“It’s complete. Everyone is getting back into their routines Thirty percent of the city has electricity na. It’s getting there faster than you would have expected. ‘Yung mga changes everyday, something gets fixed,” she stated.

Catch Kapuso actress Gwen Zamora in Innamorata with Luis Alandy and Max Collins soon on GMA Afternoon Prime this February.

Endangered Philippine eagle killed by falling branch

MANILA - A rare Philippine eagle, whose species is on the brink of extinction, was killed inside a conservation group’s breeding centre when a branch fell on its cage, the centre said.

The 15-year-old male bird, named ‘Arakan’, was one of about 250 adult Philippine eagles remaining according to the Swiss-based International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which lists

the species as “critically endangered”.

Days of non-stop rain caused the huge branch of a tree to fall on Arakan’s cage at the Philippine Eagle Foundation’s centre in the southern island of Mindanao, crushing the raptor on January 18, the foundation said.

Numerous large trees are planted inside the centre because the conservation group is “trying to simulate the natural environment of the eagles,” said the foundation’s communications officer Beauxy Auxtero.

The eagle, also known as the ‘Monkey-eating Eagle’, is one of the largest birds of prey in the world and is the most critically endangered of all the world’s raptors, the IUCN says on its website.

Famed for its elongated nape feathers that form into a shaggy crest, the Philippine eagle is found only on four of

the Philippines’ largest islands but mostly on Mindanao and grows to a metre (3.3 feet) with a two-metre wingspan.

The Philippine Eagle Foundation rescues stricken birds in the wild including Arakan who was turned over to the foundation in 1999. It also has a captive breeding programme.

The eagle, which is the country’s national bird, is protected by law but authorities say the biggest threat is the loss of its habitat as humans encroach on the country’s dwindling forest ranges.

Efforts to release rehabilitated birds into the wild have had mixed success.

In October last year, a juvenile male eagle was found apparently shot to death just two months after it was freed by the foundation.

Scenes in the City (HERE & EVERYWHERE)



FIRST, Senate President Franklin Drilon greets the new Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines Neil Reeder when the envoy made his courtesy call at the Senate on Monday, January 20. During the meeting, Reeder said that the Canadian government - which had already committed \$20 million in humanitarian aid - will continue to closely assist the Philippines in its rehabilitation efforts, following a spate of natural and man-made disasters that devastated parts of the country. SECOND, Rosemer and husband senator Tobias Jun Enverga meet Philippine VP Jejomar Binay. THIRD, Action Honda’s Rafael Nebres, Sommelier Arlene Oliveros, Scarborough Toyota’s Manny Yanga judge the Lakambini pageant. FOURTH, Lakambini producer Candace Mallari David poses with Consul General Junever Mahilum-West.

Filipino sa TORONTO

AFCM - FILIPINO MISSION, THE CENTER OF RELIEF OPERATIONS RAISED \$230,000

(Toronto- December 30, 2013) Ever since Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) Church was named as the home of the Archdiocesan Filipino Catholic Mission (AFCM) under the leadership of Reverend Father Ben Ebcas, OLA became the center of Filipino Activities in the Greater Toronto Area. OLA became the Oasis for Filipino Caregivers and Filipino Faithful hoping for spiritual enrichment and to meet their Kababayans.

Nowhere in the Greater Toronto area has the Filipino Community congregate en masse on a regular basis than OLA, not only because it is a church but it is also a hotbed of different community activities like the Pistahan sa OLA and Santa Cruzan. No wonder fittingly or by default during time of crisis, people look up to AFCM for leadership, first and foremost because of the credibility and spirituality the organization has established and secondly, because of the number of volunteers.

When Typhoon Haiyan or Yolanda struck the central part of the Philippines last November, a lot of people automatically requested AFCM through Fr. Ben for support and guidance on what to do. AFCM immediately came in to action, planning and execution for fund raising and relief came almost instantaneously. Temporalities Ministry led by Rosemer Enverga, Zeny Uy of Worship Ministry



PCCF is proud to make another donation to Mel Tiangco on behalf of the Kapuso Foundation!! Through the success of the events of PCCF we were able to help more!

and Joey Abrenilla of Youth Ministry immediately appealed to various communities, businesses and media outlets. Volunteers were called upon and donations poured in from all walks of life. All religion and all cultures just walked in the OLA halls to bring their valuable donations. Fr. Ben notwithstanding the fact that his family was also affected by the Typhoon led the Typhoon Haiyan relief operation with overwhelming results. Noticing the major effort, Cardinal Thomas Collins and Prime Minister Stephen Harper themselves travelled to OLA and lauded Fr. Ben for his leadership, the AFCM ministries and volunteers for their unselfish and passionate efforts.

The efforts of the Filipino Mission with the support of other organizations like the Knights of Columbus, PCCF, Block Rosary Crusade and other organizations resulted in the collection, sorting and shipping of 948 boxes that were sent through the generous door-to-door companies to the Philippines via the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Solicitation of over \$230,000 that was sent through Sharelife, matched dollar for dollar by the Government of Canada. In two weeks time, the total donation to the affected areas reached over 16 million pesos. A great work indeed by everyone who donated and volunteered to make a difference for the community.

Bicol Canada Community Association, Inc. holds an election

Bicol Canada Community Association, Inc. holds an election for new officers on February 16, 2014 at Our Lady of Assumption

Rafael Nebres, the incumbent president of the Bicol Canada Community Association, Inc., is calling and appealing to all Bicolanos and Bicolanos in Canada to attend the association's election of new set of officers on February 16, 2014 (Sunday), 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Social Hall (Basement) at the Our Lady of Assumption Church, 2665 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Nebres said that the Bicol Region or Region 5 has six provinces which



include Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate, and Sorsogon.

He said that Bicolanos and Bicolanos are those who were born in any towns

and barangays of the said six (6) provinces mentioned, those who got married to Bicolanos and Bicolanas, and those whose fathers and mothers who are from the towns and barangays within the six (6) provinces.

For more information, please call President Rafael Nebres, 416 - 618 1362; Vice President Benhur Llacer Salcedo, Jr, 416 - 744 - 2061 or 416 - 828 - 1842; Secretary Arlene Martinez of Cannex Immigration and Legal Services, 416 - 892 - 2916, and Mobile: 416 - 398 - 8882; email info@canneximmigration.com. (Romy Zetazate, St. Jamestown News Service)



Jennylyn Mercado Is Happy Despite Being Loveless

Kapuso actress Jennylyn Mercado, who currently stars in "Rhodora X," is quite happy despite being loveless. She broke up with ex-boyfriend Luis Manzano last year.

Last year wasn't the first Christmas she spent alone, but it was significant for her because she just started feeling what it means to be happy from the "inside."

Now that she is really focused on her job and her life, Jennylyn said it is easy for her to just understand where her happiness is coming from.

All she needs is her family and her son with ex-boyfriend Patrick Garcia. Jennylyn said, "Tapos, ang dami kong mga nari-realize sa buhay, like, hindi mo kailangan ng ka-partner sa buhay para maging masaya. Sobrang okay na okay ako." Aside from "Rhodora X," which is quite similar to a role played by Star For All Seasons and Batangas Governor Vilma Santos-Recto, she will also be hosting "Sunday All Stars" and the cooking show "Sarap With Family" on GMA News TV.

She has been receiving a lot of blessings these past years, so it's easy enough for her to be happy. So even though she just broke up with Luis, she was so busy that she had no time to really mourn for that relationship. She is thankful to GMA-7 for keeping her busy because she was able to move on from that episode of her life. In order to be more relevant in her cooking show, Jennylyn even took a short culinary course.

She learned a lot of things when it comes to love—one should not give his/her all to one relationship. "Yung, alam mo ang mga dapat mong gawin, like, siguro dapat magtira ka rin for yourself." But Jennylyn said she still doesn't regret falling in love, but there needs to be a balance in everything.

The actress said she has always been like that in love—giving her everything.

Meanwhile, Jennylyn refused to answer questions about Luis and Angel Locsin. The two admitted they still have feelings for each other and want to be together again.

But asked if she can do a project with Luis and Angel, Jennylyn said she can because that will show her professionalism.

"As long as wala akong sinasaktan na tao, wala akong tinatapakan, wala akong sinasabing masama, wala akong dapat ikatakot."

International Christian Assembly



ICA FUNDRAISING CONCERT

Reverend Jaime Buslon talks to the guests; Maria Panaligan sings at the fund-raising; Nadeene Panaligan wins a prize; Youth group perform a dance number; Carmie dances with the youth group; Jasmine and Maria pose for a photo.

Philippines

Phl, UK, US Police bustCybersex ring



Parents and relatives of the rescued children allegedly victims of Cyber Pornography cover their faces from press photographers and TV cameramen.

LONDON - An international probe has cracked a pedophile ring which streamed live sexual abuse of Filipino children over the Internet, leading to dozens of arrests, police in the Philippines, Britain and Australia said.

Under Operation Endeavour which spanned a dozen nations, 29 people have been arrested, including 11 in the Philippines, while three other ongoing probes have identified 733 suspects, Britain's National Crime Agency said.

Fifteen child victims aged between six and 15 have been rescued, it added.

"This is part of our intensified efforts to end this scourge... of live streaming of child sexual abuse" to order by foreign pedophiles, said Senior Superintendent Gilbert Sosa, head of the Philippine police's anti-cybercrime unit.

"This has become a major problem in the Philippines, where in some cases even the parents are involved," he told AFP, declining to give specific details that could compromise ongoing operations.

Sosa said that severe poverty had forced many youngsters into prostitution or into working in so-called cybersex dens, a booming business believed to be focused on the central island of Cebu.

Britain's crime agency said Operation Endeavour began in 2012 with the discovery of obscene videos on a British pedophile's computer.

The British man, Timothy Ford, was sentenced in March last year to eight and a half years in prison while an associate, Thomas Owens, was convicted four months later.

Both men were said to have paid for live abuse of children on the Internet, and had at one point planned to travel to the Philippines to carry out "contact abuse" of minors.

Authorities in 12 countries were involved in the arrest of 29 suspects, the British crime agency said. Of 17 British suspects, five have been convicted and nine investigations are ongoing.

"Extreme poverty, the increasing availability of high speed Internet, and the existence of a vast and comparatively wealthy overseas customer base has led to organized crime groups exploiting children for financial gain," it said in a statement.

The agency called abuse in developing countries "a significant and emerging threat".

"This investigation has identified some extremely dangerous child sexual offenders who believed paying for children to be abused to order was something they could get away with," said Andy Baker, deputy director of the agency's child exploitation and online protection command.

"Protecting the victims of abuse is our priority and that means attacking every link in the chain, from dismantling the organised groups who are motivated by profit through to targeting their customers," he added.

The Australian Federal Police said it had executed six search warrants under the international operation that had led to the arrest of three Australians.

"Two of the men were arrested in Western Australia and one Sydney man was arrested by the Royal Thai Police in Bangkok," it said.

"Hundreds of thousands of images and videos depicting online child sexual exploitation, including children as young as five years old, were found during the warrants."

The Australian offenders allegedly financed and ordered child abuse "shows" from the Philippines.

Police operations in the Philippines have focused on the impoverished village of Ibabao on Cebu island.

In September last year, a Filipino couple in their 30s were arrested in Ibabao for forcing their three young children to engage in sex acts and charging clients up to \$100 each to watch using webcams.

Twelve other children were subsequently rescued, also in Ibabao, and put in the care of government social workers, according to official police records.

"Other operations elsewhere in the Philippines are ongoing and we are not at liberty to discuss them at length because we might compromise them," he said.

Britain's crime agency said three other investigations into live streaming of child abuse have netted 733 suspects globally, including 139 in Britain and 594 overseas.

A celibate Kris Aquino as president will eradicate poverty in PH

By Ellen Tordesillas

I cannot imagine the Philippines without

Kris Aquino. It would be boring.

I want Kris Aquino for President.

Everybody talks about the need for out-of-the box solutions to the problem of poverty that is the lot of almost a third of the country's 99 million population. Kris Aquino has found the solution: don't have sex and you will be blessed with money beyond your dreams.

In an interview last Tuesday with best friend Boy Abunda in her classy all-white house, Aquino couldn't contain her joy for all the blessings coming her way: the box-office success of the movie of her son, Bimby, even if critics said it was inane (one critic said it was "contempt for the audience"); a hefty new contract with ABS-CBN after she floated the rumor that she was considering the job offer of businessman Manny V. Pangilinan to head TV5; plus many more.

These are her choice quotes:

"Ngayon ko na-realize pala talaga na it's possible na 'yung kaligayahan mo it doesn't come pala from fulfillment sa sarili but it comes from seeing people loving your child. Sinabi ko nga, nagdarasal ako, 'God, ano ba ang nagawa kong bongga para ibigay mo ito kay Bimb?' Kasi hindi ba nasa Biblia 'yon na kung ano ang itanim mo bilang magulang 'yon ang aanihin ng anak. So sabi ko, 'Thank you God.'""Kasi siguro mabait ako, kasi siguro celibate ako, sorry I have to say, let's be honest. ... I'm just saying na siguro parang alam ko kung ano ang priorities in life ko and siguro talaga kung ano ang pinakamahalaga sa iyo, 'yun ang ipagkakaloob sa iyo ng Diyos at ang pinakamahalaga sa akin ay 'yung dalawang anak ko."

"I know my priorities siguro kaya na bi-blessed because I don't have sex."

Let's try to follow Kris' logic: she is blessed –so rich, she is one of the country's top taxpayers - because she is mabait. That means the Filipinos living in poverty with no roof over their heads, the children scavenging for food are not mabait.

She said she is blessed because she doesn't have sex. That means all those poor people are having an active sex life.

Such genius. Only a Kris Aquino could have come up with that theory..

So if Kris becomes president, she will be a good example of population control. No sex, no more children. We will all be rich and blessed. Hurray! Kris Aquino for President.

With Kris Aquino in Malacañang, there will be complete transparency (who needs the Freedom of Information law?). Nothing will be taboo for her: from the color of her underwear (In her "Morning Girl" show with Korina Sanchez in 2004, she even revealed without any prodding the color of her panty) to her quarrels with her lovers (In 2003, she related on TV her bedroom fight with live-in partner, actor Joey Marquez. She said "Sinasabi nila that I grabbed at his genitals. I did. I wanted to crush it.")

You would think her "Joey you gave me STD" would be difficult to top? You will be surprised with what Kris can come up with in the future.

With Kris Aquino as president, it will not only be more fun in the Philippines. It will be a much-blessed Philippines.



Pauleen Luna

Bakit hindi sila magkasama ni Bossing noong Christmas

Last December lang kinumpirma mismo ni Bossing Vic Sotto ang kanilang relasyon ni Kapuso host-actress Pauleen Luna. Inamin ito ni Vic sa isang live interview habang nagpo-promote siya ng kanyang pelikulang My Little Bossings.

Matagal ding itinago nina Vic at Pauleen ang relasyon nila sa press, kaya nang isinapubliko na ito ni Bossing ay talagang tuwang-tuwa ang Kapuso actress. "Kinilig ako," pahayag ni Pauleen nang tanungin siya ng PEP ng kanyang reaksiyon sa pag-amin ng boyfriend.

Nang makita ng press si Pauleen sa ginanap na press conference ng kanyang pinakabagong show na The Borrowed Wife, maraming ibinatong tanong sa kanya tungkol sa kanyang love life.

Unang tanong ng press kay Pauleen: from 1 to 100, ano ang grade mo sa relationship mo kay Bossing? "I'm very happy. 101," nakangiting sagot ni Pauleen.

Sunod namag ipinakuwento kay Pauleen ang holiday season niya. Bahagi niya, hindi raw niya nakasama si Vic noong Pasko dahil sa Japan daw sila nag-celebrate ng Christmas. "It was my family's decision to spend the holidays in Japan. Siyempre kasama ako," aniya.

Hindi na rin daw nakapag-commit si Bossing na makasama sa Japan dahil marami pang aasikasuhing requirements. "Kasi kailangan ng visa doon eh. Masyadong mahaba 'yung proseso eh. Of course naiintindihan ko na kailangan niya rin dito sa Pilipinas dahil kailangan kasama niya 'yung family niya. Naiintindihan ko naman," paliwanag ni Pauleen.

Dagdag ni Pauleen, hindi raw ito ang first Christmas nila ni Bossing kaya okay lang din sa kanyang hindi sila magkasama. Hinayaan na rin daw niya itong mag-promote ng My Little Bossings na entry sa last Metro Manila Film Festival. Ayon pa sa aktres, hindi siya nagsisisi dahil mabuti naman ang kinalabasan ng pelikula ng boyfriend dahil nag-number one ito sa takilya.

Ano ba ang Christmas gift ni Bossing kay Pauleen?

"Wala eh. Hindi kami ganoon eh. Kahit siya rin naman sa akin. Surprising but hindi kami masyadong materialistic with each other," anang aktres.

Ayon pa kay Pauleen, mas importante raw ang time sa kanila ni Bossing. "Mas mabigat para sa amin 'yung time spent together than gifts. Kasi anything naman

PAULEEN
continued on page 26

Anghel ng Tahanan Christmas Party



FROM LEFT, Mon Datol (FAR LEFT) of Philippine Courier and Cecille Araneta (2ND FROM RIGHT) pose with the Anghel candidates; Singing seems to be a talent for all candidates; Mon datol checks out who has the longest hair in the game Bring Me; Sharmaine Jalos, Joe Damasco and Cecille Araneta pose for a picture; Bong Molano wins the balloon-popping contest.

Philippines

US helps Phl beef up Defense

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City – The United States is helping improve the Philippines’ maritime defense capability now that the American government has described as “dangerous” a new Chinese fishing law in disputed Asian waters, US Ambassador Philip Goldberg said here.

Brushing aside another query about the resumption of American military bases in the Philippines to address a “provocative” China, Goldberg said what has been put on the table is “a framework agreement on enhanced rotational presence which would involve a greater cooperation between our two militaries.”

This framework, which was proposed to the Philippines in August last year, would increase American naval presence in contested sea lanes to keep these waters free for commerce and navigation, according to the Philippines’ defense department.

“Our two militaries have deep, long-standing, historical relationships and what we are talking about doing is not about the 20th century and the bases, but about the 21st century and the kind of cooperation we can have to work together as we confront 21st century problems,” Goldberg told reporters after he was honored by the Philippine Military Academy here.

“Don’t dwell on the past but think about what the future holds,” he said. “That’s what we are trying to do regionally.”



China had declared that all fishing vessels venturing into areas it considered part of Chinese territory must secure its permission. The West Philippine Sea, the name Manila uses for that part of the South China Sea it considered part of the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone, is among the areas China now wants to control.

A congressman from Cagayan de Oro said that China has been using its militray prowess to intimidate the Philippines following the issueance of a Chinese rule prohibiting non-Chinese fishermen from fishing in the West Philippiine Sea (South China Sea).

Representative Rufus Rodriguez said that the additional vessels acquired by the Philippine Coast Guard do not deter the mighty Asian nation from imposing its presence on the waters that the Philippines and China dispute.

“No matter what, we are limited with

our resources to buy materials like more patrol vessels and military vessels, what we acquired were coast guard cutters,” Rodriguez said in an interview with Inquirer Radio 990AM Friday afternoon.

“This is very small compared to China, they have an aircraft carrier and they will buy three more.”

According to Rodriguez, China continues to intrude into the operations of Filipino fishermen in the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which gives the country a 200-mile area from the shoreline where local fishermen can freely operate.

The new fisheries law issued by the Hainan Provincial People’s Congress by China over the South China Sea will be difficult to implement, Kalayaan Mayor Eugenio Bito-onon said on Friday.

“That is difficult to implement because there are a lot of claimant countries and their islets are populated..especially in the Spratlys,” Bito-onon said in a phone interview.

Bito-onon, whose portion of jurisdiction is in the Spratlys, said other claimants over South China Sea, like Malaysia, Vietnam, and Taiwan have their own airstrips, garrisons and ports.

“How would you restrict that, how about the freedom of navigation, most especially to fishermen? That is international waters,” he said.



Cristine Reyes is busy with projects

After her breakup with Derek Ramsay, Cristine Reyes is still loveless although she admitted she has suitors now. If the time comes she'll find someone worthy to love again, the actress said she's already ready for it.

However, she hasn't found anyone yet who is worthy to enter into a relationship with.

Asked about Derek, the actress said they remained friends even after the breakup. That is how they like to separate, she added. It is important for them to maintain their friendship even after their one-month relationship. Besides the reason that she hasn't found anyone yet, Cristine stated that she has no time to date anyone right now because she's busy taping for "Honesto."

Cristine said she's happy to be part of the top-rating program. She even shared that people call her "Nurse Marie" or "Marie" now. That's the name of her character in "Honesto." It's good to know that she is being recognized because of her role, Cristine said. She was not originally part of the teleserye, but joined the case in the first half of the program.

Aside from "Honesto," Cristine is also finishing two movies--the one with Derek, Heart Evangelista and John Estrada for "Trophy Wife" and "Gifted" with Anne Curtis and Sam Milby.

Meanwhile, she also shared how was 2013 for her. She said there's no particular bad thing that happened to her. There was no highlight that will stay with her until this year.

In fact, Cristine said she had a relatively good 2013.

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The Philippines’ “Mr. Hitmaker”, Rey Valera, the man behind many of Philippines’ most memorable OPM love songs, is coming to Toronto for solo concert titled after one of his many popular tunes, Kahit Maputi na ng Buhok Ko.

It's time to rekindle those youthful '80's memories – when most of us sported natural black hair and hearing Rey Valera's tunes ... on the radio, in restaurants where we dated, in karaoke bars, on TV teleseryes and in the movie theatres where the theme song is one of Rey's compositions. Everywhere.

The Rey Valera concert is the ideal Valentines date for couples. It's also a fun date among barkadas, a reunion of sorts for high school and college friends. More importantly, it can be a time for Canadian-Filipinos to give respect and honor to an OPM legend whose songs were part of their lives, ditties they sang every now and then, and tunes that renew sweet memories.

ROOTS. Rey Valera hails from the city of Meycauayan, Bulacan. Filipinos from that part of the Philippines are known to be romantic, rythmical and poetic. And those adjectives are so fit for the songs Rey has composed. He wrote lyrics and melodies that easily won him an in-house producer status at Vicor recording company in 1977.

His compositions became big hits for other artists, Rico Puno (Sorry Na, Puede Ba), Geraldine (Pangako), Pol Enriquez (Ayoko Na Sa Yo) and most notably, the launch of Sharon Cuneta's recording career.

SHARON SINGS VALERA. One of Rey's major achievement was Sharon Cuneta's first-ever hit single, Mr. DJ. This was in 1978 when the young and bubbly Cuneta's name first appeared in Philippine pop charts. The song launched her recording career on her way to be dubbed as the "Megastar" of Philippine entertainment. Many of Rey's classic hits were part Sharon's string of early hits which include Naaalala Ka, Kahit Maputi Na Ang Buhok Ko, among others.

It is no wonder that Rey Valera is one of Sharon's favorite composer. Even Cuneta's blockbuster movies were titled after Rey's popular hits, *Maging Sino Ka Man*, in 1991 with Robin Padilla, *Kung Kailangan Mo Ako* with Rudy Fernandez, to name a few. In 1992, Sharon reconciled with estranged husband Gabby Concepcion in the movie, *Tayang Dalawa*, based on another of Rey's popular compositions with the same title. This gave Sharon a grand slam Best Actress nomination from PMPC Star Awards for Movies, FAMAS, Film Academy of the Philippines and Gawad

To this day, Sharon is ever so thankful to her favorite composer. In Philippine recording and movie industries, Sharon singing Valera has always been a winning chemistry.

ON HUMILITY. When Rey started writing songs, being a recording artist is not his goal. He admits that he did not have the self-esteem to become one. All he wanted was to be behind the scenes, writing songs for the up-and-coming recording stars. His works came at the height of OPM popularity. Thanks to the pioneers of original Filipino pop music – Hotdog, Cinderella, Rico Puno, Basil Valdez, Freddie Aguilar, Florante and a lot more.

Behind the scene is where he saw himself. Not until, Vicor has encouraged him to record his own compositions. Never mind self-esteem, there was steam in the final product. His first single was an instant hit. But that did not really convince him that he has what it takes to be a recording artist. First, he humbly admits that he doesn't have the looks. But (half-jokingly), when he saw Rico Puno rise to fame, his guts were boosted.

HITS-AFTER-HITS. Before digital recording and YouTube surfaced, Rey has been producing hits after hits of beautiful musical compositions. In the late '70s and early '80s, many of his analog recordings were on top of the charts and have been played on the radio airwaves repeatedly for a long period of time.

Rey's musical style is one of harmonic simplicity. The chord sequence is simple. The lyrics are uncomplicated, modest and colloquial. The songs elicit Rey's down-to-earth personality. But most important of all is how his songs resonate with the large audience.

A FLAVOUR OF HOTDOG. There is an added flavour to Rey Valera's Toronto concert. With the musical direction, Mon Torralba, composer and original member of the famed Hotdog Band, there will be two OPM legends on stage.

Mon adlibs, “If Rey is the spaghetti, I will add Hotdog to the mix to make this a real Filipino treat”.

Ikaw ang Miss Universe ng Buhay
Ko was Hotdog's first single. But Mon's composition, PERS LAB (aka "Twinky", the first two syllables of the song), has affirmed the acceptance of the new genre of Filipino music referred to as Manila Sound. It was a trend that later evolved to what is now called Original Pilipino Music.

(OPM). Music trends come and go but the classic songs remain. To date, Rey's and Mon's compositions are being re-recorded and sang by the new recording artists and used as theme songs for movies and TV series.

Mon's PERS LAB was the theme song for the movie, "Ang Utol Kong Hoodlum", for the GMA's TV series, "First Time" and was sang and re-recorded by many recording artists. Charlie Green, the famed Britain's Got Talent finalist and now a celebrated artist in the Philippines, launched his recording career singing the original version of Pers Lab. Later on, Green recorded an English version "My First Love", Mon's music topped with lyrics by notable music writer, Pamela Philips Oland.

But Mon salutes to Rey, saying... "If I was to pick an OPM song representative of the 80's era, it will be a Rey Valera tune. And if you don't know Rey Valera, he is an OPM legend whose multiple hit songs and musical accomplishments may be much larger than his name."

THE CANADIAN TOUR. On February 14, it's a date at the Toronto Pavilion, 190 Railside Rd, Toronto. Doors open for this spectacular show at 6pm. Be there early! The first 14 ladies will get a surprise Valentines gift.

On February 16, it's family day in Hamilton, at the McIntyre Performing Arts Centre (Mohawk College), 135 Fennel

REY VALERA
continued on page 16

RIGHT, Maria Panaligan practices with Isabella Santiago for the Reay Valera concert.





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EULOGY *for Flor Vendiola*

PREPARED & DELIVERED By ACE ALVAREZ on behalf of the PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - TORONTO AT THE WAKE OF FLOR VENDIOLA
Wednesday, January 8, 2014
Highland Funeral Homes
Sheppard Avenue East, Toronto, Ontario

Thank you so much Father ...
Good evening everybody. Magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat.

For most of you who do not know me, I'm Ace Alvarez – a fellow Director of Flor at the Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Toronto, or the PCCT. So, on behalf of the Board of Directors, Oswald Tugadi – the President of the PCCT (who is in the Philippines at the moment on family and business trip) and our fellow Officers and Members at the PCCT, and on my own behalf and that of my wife, Gie Alvarez – who is likewise a close friend of Flor, I stand here before you to remember our beloved Flor Vendiola.

Last night, in his Homily here, Deacon Ramon Villardo of the Archdiocese of Toronto and assigned at the St. Maria Goretti Parish on Kennedy Road and Eglinton Avenue East in Scarborough, asked, “What is the greatest lesson that you learned on Flor’s passing?”

On the Feast of the Epiphany on Sunday, January 5, my wife and I were at the Holy Mass at St. Bartholomew Parish on Brimley Road and Sheppard Avenue East here in Scarborough, where Fr. Roger Brennan delivered a very beautiful homily, taken from the Book of Matthew, Chapter 2, Verses 1 to 12. This was the visit of the three Wise Men to Jesus – after



our Lord’s birth in Bethlehem.
Of course, we all know of that story.
Reflecting on the story though, it is a narration of the journey of life, of guidance on the way, of delight in finding faith and God, of the intrigue of a greedy and jealous king, and of the good, beating the bad. We like the end of the story when the wise men outwitted Herod.
Fr. Brennan said that it is very unfortunate that life on Earth is full of deception – just like what the jealous Herod asked the three wise men: to tell him, on their way back to the east, where the Lord of lords and the King of kings could be found in Bethlehem so that Herod could also pay homage to Him. His motive though was to kill the infant Jesus.
The story of the Visit of the Three Wise Men, as stated, is a story of the journey of our life; of

guidance on the way.
Fr. Brennan -- and, so did Deacon Villardo, are in one, saying that at the end of our journey here on Earth – it doesn’t matter how wealthy we are, the titles that we accumulated. Once the heart stops beating, that’s it! We leave everything behind.
What matters, they said, is how a person lived one’s life; the kindness and compassion with which one has lived one’s life.
How do we remember then Flor Vendiola?
For most people who have not had a chance to meet her up-close and personal, she would be remembered – together with her equally kind and humble husband Mel, as the inspiring entrepreneur behind one great Filipino enterprise, FV Foods.
For most of us who have been given the privilege as her close friends, Flor Vendiola is more than FV Foods.
I asked the PCCT Board Members to give me five descriptives of Flor. Summing all of them up, the Board Members’ -- among others, Oswald Tugadi, Steve Pagao, Nimfa Drilon, Cherrie Liu, Moises Calo, Joyce Ortiz, Joseph Alilio, and the PCCT Office’s Administrative Manager, Isa Tugadi, descriptives of Flor redound to firsts and foremost, were of Flor’s humility, kindheartedness, generosity with her time and resources, a good sister to everyone with a contaminating smile. Friends, Flor has been described in so many ways, but those I mentioned redound to the gist of the qualities of our dear departed PCCT Director Flor Vendiola. Even in social media, people whose lives have been touched by Flor, describe her similarly.
My personal and professional associations with Flor date back from 1996 when she was part of MVM Productions. Flor later joined the PCCT and sat on the Board for the last four

terms. I remember a situation during the mid 2000s when the Board – under the Presidency of Cora dela Cruz, had a Year-End Planning Session for the ensuing year in Niagara Falls.
Let me quote from this memento on Flor that I picked up at the foyer: “I’d like the memory of me to be a happy one. I’d like to leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done.”
So, in accord with those, let me end by saying ... After the PCCT Planning Session in Niagara Falls, we went to Lundys Lane Factory Shopping Outlet Mall. It was heavily snowing that day. I think it was the third, or fourth week of December. After shopping, we went to look for the van of one of the directors picking us up. While walking in the vast parking lot, Flor put her arm around mine, so she could avoid slipping in the icy parking lot. It was at that situation where the other directors saw us. Hence, treating one another as brothers and/ or sisters, all the directors were teasing us. So, I said, “Flor and I were not wearing our reading glasses and we thought that what was written on the signage was “Lovers Lane”. We were wrong; turned out, it was “Lundys Lane ...”. Only a few weeks ago, this story was recalled by our President, Oswald Tugadi, during an after Board Meeting chat we had; and as usual, Flor and I gave him our hearty laughter.
... so, Flor, WE, at the PCCT– and so with all these people whose lives you have touched, know that from hereon, you will only have laughter ... smiles – no more stress, no more hurt, BUT ALL HAPPINESS in the company and embrace of God and angels. Until we meet again, Flor (but not so soon for me, Lord, please).
Thank you so much, everybody. Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat.

Fate of Baby Hospital Hangs in the Balance



ROOMFUL OF MOMS. Newly born babies are breastfed by their mothers in a ward at Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital in Manila in this photo taken on Aug. 5 last year during the world celebration of Breastfeeding Week. RICHARD A. REYES

MANILA - Time is ticking for changes in the Philippines’ “baby factory”—for better or for worse.
Aging, decrepit, grimy and dark, Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital is set to be transferred from the old Bilibid compound

on Lope de Vega to the San Lazaro headquarters of the Department of Health (DOH) on Rizal Avenue a few kilometers to the north.
The prospective home will be the third time the hospital, which started as a six-bed clinic in 1920 named after the chair of the public welfare board, will move.
It will happen once Health Secretary Enrique Ona decides to implement a P743-million contract awarded to J.D. Legaspi Construction, which won the right to design and build the hospital in a bidding last year. The private contractor has filed a petition in the Makati Regional Trial Court to compel Ona to honor the deal.

PPP arrangement
When it is built—under a public-private

partnership (PPP) arrangement—what is regarded as the world’s busiest maternity hospital will no doubt provide modern delivery services in place of the less-than-decent circumstances the mostly indigent patients get now. It will also mean the poor mothers will not be able to afford the amenities.
“Experience tells us that PPP projects are bound to make the cost of public services higher, further disenfranchising the poor,” said Joms Salvador, secretary general of Gabriela, the militant party-list women’s group.
The government says Fabella will continue to serve the poor, as only a portion of the hospital will cater to paying patients. But since a private entity is involved, profiteering will definitely come into the picture, Salvador said in a phone interview.
A privatized Fabella would result in mothers giving birth in ill-equipped public health clinics or at home, she said.
“For so many years, the country has failed to curb maternal mortality rates. Once Fabella is no longer accessible to the poor, infant and maternal mortality rates would

soar,” Salvador said.
During a visit to the hospital on a sultry Tuesday morning, the Inquirer was told 51 babies were born there on Monday—half the births during the peak season late in the year. Most marriages happen either in the new year in January or in February to coincide with Valentine’s Day.
Husbands and relatives bringing plastic bags of crackers, baby diapers and alcohol, among other things, troop to the hospital, filling all the vacant seats that line the dingy walls of the hallway.

Too many patients
“When there are too many patients, one goes almost immediately after the other, with the floor still wet after being quickly mopped up. The hurried, haphazard cleaning exposes the patient to infection. Sterile techniques are no longer observed.”
But for Gantang, Calinao and the other mothers who have just given birth at Fabella say that they’re OK in spite of the inconveniences. For them, having a baby safe and sound makes everything else sweet.

Remembering *Flor Vendiola*



FIRST, After the funeral of our friend, Flor Vendiola of FV Foods, the lunch was held at Dragon Pearl Restaurant; some of the attendees are Dr. Francis Rementilla, Dra. and Mr. Gamo, Mr. and Mrs. Mon & Teresa Toralba, Rodney and Chyrell, etc. SECOND, Friends, relatives, and business associates paid their last respect to our dearest friend Flor Vendiola of FV Foods; the viewing was at Highland Funeral Home (Jan. 7 and 8); the Funeral Mass was held at Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church; and the interment was at Pine Hills Cemetery on Jan. 9, 2014 THIRD, Wilson and Bathurst Employees of FV Foods paying their last respect to our friend, Flor Vendiola. FOURTH, Zena Zagala and Consul General Junever Mahilum-West pays their respect to Flor Vendiola. PHOTOS BY ARIEL RAMOS



Filipino Good Life

Welcome the Swimsuit back

Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 put the swimsuit long after everybody else has eliminated it. We hope they keep it.

I was pleasantly surprised when Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 beauty pageant included a swimsuit

beautiful model. The first issue, released in 1964, entailed a cover featuring Babette March and a five-page layout. I believe the

teens and prefer to spend

reason for the elimination of the swimsuit competition was the loud cheers emanating from the audience as if they are in a boxing match. Ironically, there seems to be no difference in their cheers whether it is a gown or a casual competition.

Unfortunately, the date of the Lakambini pageant will change from January to sometime in the middle of the year, according to pageant impresario Candace Mallari David. I guess I'll have to keep my swimsuit shots until February of the coming year to put it in the cover.

competition in the program. It has been more than 10 years when others have replaced theirs with a "casual" attire competition. With a January date, it is a welcome diversion to the slow winter months, like the birth of the Swimsuit issue of Sports Illustrated whose original purpose was to fill the winter months, a typically slow point in the sporting calendar and to fill space, including the cover, with a

It wasn't always like this.

New Year's eve celebration used to be a smaller version of

the Christmas celebration

greeting the year

with their friends in greeting the new year in bars or some city centre with thousands of other revellers. Those who have married spend their time with the other family or other relatives.

In my family, only one family managed to bring their three children. Then again, they are still too young to be going out or to be left at home, even if that is what the children would have wanted, what with no one to play with.

Through the years, the new year's celebration has become quieter. As we have seen ourselves age, the children grow up, more and more we end up with the company of the TV, watching giddy people from all over the world celebrate the coming of the year.

It seems that New Year's eve celebration has been replaced

by Easter

of Sunday what with its tradition an an Easter egg hunt remains activity for children. Therefore, all the children who have grown up, married, had children will definitely attend.

But now comes the Rey Valera Valentine concert coming this February 14 in Toronto and February 16 in Hamilton. The Rey Valera concert will feature our local talents to showcase his romantic compositions for those in love. There is also the True Faith and Wency Cornejo concert on February 22. With nothing happening on the horizon except frigid weather, these two concerts are a welcome break from this real winter we are getting.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT, 3rd runner-up Denice Raagas, 1st runner-up Alison Garcia, 2nd runner-up Keesha Cerezo Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 titlist Krista Bella and Alison Garcia with brother and mom (PHOTO BY BONG MOLANO).



Collaboration of Talent

A collaboration of talented singers composed of Maria Panaligan, Meghan Garvida, Maria Salac, Monarie Ocray, Shay Garrido and Elle Delizo will perform at the Charice World Tour Live in Toronto on March 29, 2014 Saturday 7PM at GLOBAL KINGDOM MINISTRIES 1250 Markham Road Scarborough, ON M1H 2Y9

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Pastry chef shares Canada life



VICTORIA, British Columbia - A Filipina pastry chef who came to Canada as a temporary foreign worker bakes her way to becoming an immigrant.

Pastry chef Tina Velasco was all smiles while decorating her purple yam cake. After all, her husband Alex and their children were able to join her in Victoria just a year after she came to Canada.

Considered as a highly skilled worker, Velasco quickly became an immigrant through the Provincial Nominee Program. But she discovered that not all was sugar and spice without her family.

“There are so many challenges talaga. A new country, and then you're alone, by yourself and then my family is in the Philippines and then I have three kids. It's really a struggle, a daily struggle because of the homesick and separation anxiety with your family,” Velasco said.

Before coming to Canada, Velasco lived the sweet life working as a pastry

chef at the Bellevue Hotel in Alabang and honing her skills through culinary competitions.

Her husband Alex was also managing their family business, but they both wanted something more for their children.

“It has been very challenging, initially. But we've met lots of good friends, nice

people who helped us along the way. I must say this has been a good decision for us,” he said.

Five years after leaving Manila, Velasco's Victoria clientele has steadily grown and have kept her busy with cake orders for all kinds of occasion.

But for Velasco, the real icing on the cake will be her very own bakeshop one day.

She believes success is possible for immigrants like her if they stick to doing what they love.

“Sometimes, it's really hard but you know they would just really like to go out and then look for whatever job that they could easily fit in their field. Don't give up. There are so many opportunities out there,” she said.

US immigrants get free help

in US naturalization

SAN JOSE, California – A campaign to help legal immigrants become US citizens held its first ethnic media roundtable on Friday, Jan. 24 to encourage legal permanent residents to naturalize.

The New Americans Campaign (NAC) initiated in 2012 by a network of businesses, nonprofit organizations and grant-makers exhorted the assembled group of ethnic media representatives and community leaders to educate their audiences on the value and benefits of becoming a US citizen.

To become US citizens, applicants must have been legal residents for five years. Their children become naturalized as a consequence of their own naturalization.

NAC partner New America Media (NAM) a NAC partner, hosted the briefing by speakers from immigration rights advocates and support groups

The event couldn't have come at a better time for the Filipino-American community. The request Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for the stranded relatives of Haiyan super-typhoon victims last year has caused a furor and is still unresolved.

For other immigrant groups, the urgency of proper documentation has come to the fore now that the Affordable Care Act (ACA or popularly, Obamacare) is law.



Matteo Guidicelli Remains Mum About Sarah Geronimo

Matteo Guidicelli apologized to the press for not being able to answer questions about rumored girlfriend Sarah Geronimo. He said that there is a right time to answer those questions and unfortunately, that time is not now.

The actor also said that he is proud of what they have, and he is actually very happy with what's happening in their “relationship.” However, he wants to protect Sarah and their relationship.

He also wants to respect Sarah, her family and his family as well.

Asked again if he's courting the Popstar Princess or if they already an item, Matteo maintained everybody's happy right now.

There are also news reports saying that Mommy Divine, Sarah's mother, approves of Matteo. “Talaga? E, di kung ganun, maraming salamat. Kung ganun, di masaya.”

Mommy Divine is known to be strict when it comes to Sarah's suitors.

Matteo was also asked if he wants to be careful now with Sarah because his previous relationship with Maja was very public? “Hindi ko po alam ang isasagot ngayon po, kasi may proper time and everybody will know. But, as of now, we wanna keep it to us muna.”

He denied that his experience with Maja is affecting his decisions now. They have been together for a year, and separated in 2012.

Since he is co-hosting ABS-CBN's “The Biggest Loser,” does he think he is the biggest loser or biggest winner in Sarah's heart? Matteo maintained the press would have to ask Sarah that question and that everybody wants to be a winner in all they do.

In all his projects and in everything he does, Matteo always tries to give his best, so he will emerge as the winner.

Marian Rivera Doesn't Mind Competition With Angel Locsin

Marian Rivera shrugged off issues surrounding her and Kapamilya actress Angel Locsin. Their new shows will be pitted against each other at the primetime block.

Marian is starring in “Carmela” while Angel's “The Legal Wife” is set to air soon. When Angel was still with GMA-7, Marian played second fiddle to her as all of the major projects of the network went to Angel.

However, when the actress transferred to ABS-CBN, Marian immediately became the Kapuso network's primetime queen.

The two of them are always pitted against each other, but Marian said it's all work for her. She understands and respects competitions, but what's important for her is that she's happy in real life, the actress added.

She was also asked about the decision of ABS-CBN to remake “Dyesebel,” a fantasy she also did before with GMA-7. Anne Curtis will be reprising the role of the lovelorn mermaid for the ABS-CBN remake.

Marian doesn't mind that someone else is doing the role she has made popular again in television. Even when she did “Dyesebel,” someone else also did it before her, Marian said. “At si Anne Curtis din naman, mabait naman sa akin yun. Kapag nagkikita kami, e, nagbabatian naman kami.” When they were doing a magazine shoot for Rogue, Anne kept on exchanging jokes with her, Marian said.

It cannot be helped that these roles will be reprised, and it's okay with Marian if they are. In fact, Marian is just happy she was able to do both “Dyesebel” and “Darna.”

Rey Valera 's Toronto Valentine

REY VALERA
continued from page 11

Ave, Hamilton. Doors open at 2pm.

The Rey Valera tickets are at affordable prices starting at \$30, \$45 and \$60 VIP.

We are pleased to announce that two of Toronto's famous singers will be sharing the stage with Rey Valera: 2012 TFCkat Eastern Canada Champion and Toronto's pride Theresa Panaligan together with multi-awarded 14-year old belter from Markham, Isabella Santiago. Added to the mix are well-known singers Ryan Orlanda, Joshua Tamayo and Don Torres. In Hamilton, rising star Liza Ombao of the Niagara region

will grace the show.

If there is a phrase in a popular song that aptly describes the travails of this very popular singer/songwriter it would be from Barry Manilow's tune, “I write the songs that make the whole world sing”. Indeed, Filipinos all over the world are singing his songs. It won't be a surprise if the whole audience in this show will hum and sing to his every hit song.

“Kahit Maputi Na Ang Buhok Ko” is presented by Productions in cooperation with TFC; also brought to you by Action Honda, Pinoy Radio, Cannex Immigrataion & Legal Services, Rose Ty of Coldwell Bankers, and our community sponsors I-Remit, FV Foods, Body Bliss, Kenway Dental,

Bright Star Tours, Rhonrose Printing, Sebang Travel; Caregivers Niagara, and with deepest gratitude to our Media Partners, Tess Cusipag of Balita, Joy Sarmiento of Pinoy T.O., Romy Marquez of Romar Media Canada, Joey Baking of Little Manila Confidential, Ronnie & Claire Dela Gana of Kubo Media, Gary Ibanez of Pinoy Kultura Magazine and Ino Sanchez of Inspirasyon.

FOR TICKETS AND SPONSORSHIPS, call Edna at 647 280-1969 or Ino at 647 893-8847.

To buy your tickets online please visit www.filipinosmakingwaves



“Saint John The Baptist Prayer Group” started the New Year with the pilgrimage on Jan. 4, 2014 to 3 churches in Buffalo, namely Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Infant Jesus Shrine, and Our Lady of Victory Church. PHOTO BY ARIEL RAMOS

Western Union Presents

Bayan Bayanan sa Toronto

Produced by Eskwela Incorporated with the support of the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa and Toronto Philippine Consulate General and iKubo Media

Bayan Bayanan, Letters from Home is a theatrical production of a modern masterpiece by acclaimed Filipino playwright Bienvenido Noriega, Jr., with added scenes by international award-winning playwright/director Anton Juan, PhD. Anton is a Tenured Senior Professor of Directing and Playwriting/Theatre and Social Concerns/ Artistic Director, New Playwright's Workshop, in the Department of Film, Television, and Theatre at the UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME in Indiana.

The play revolves around a group of expatriate Filipinos (Pinoy)s in Switzerland in the late 70's, reckoned to be the start of the global wave of Filipino migration. The Pinoys gather in Manang's house and reminisce about their life back home in the Philippines and the stories of the families they left behind. The shared experiences and re-creation of Filipino

life from varied perspectives of these Pinoys evolve to become their armor against the difficulties and challenges of living in a country not their own and the constant pain of loneliness.

Dr. Anton Juan has directed this play in Athens,

support of the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa and Toronto Philippine Consulate General and iKubo Media

Produced by Eskwela Incorporated with the support of the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa and Toronto Philippine Consulate General and iKubo Media

Eskwela Incorporated is an event management company that produces inspiring, informative and celebratory events designed to advance and connect Filipinos globally. It is created to provide Filipinos with a forum to share their experiences, insights and knowledge to educate, inspire and empower Filipinos who are dedicated to rebuilding and elevating our status as world class nation.



London, Geneva, Paris and Chicago.

This production is made possible with the support of community partners: Event Executives, JDL School of Performing Arts, Mother Publishing and Studio Six Productions.

Have questions about Western Union Presents Bayan Bayanan sa Toronto? Contact Produced by Eskwela Incorporated with the

For inquiries, feel free to email us at eskwelaincorporated@gmail.com

The venue is at the Toronto Public Library - Fairview Theatre

35 Fairview Mall Drive

Toronto and showtimes are on Friday, March 7 at 7pm; Saturday, March 8 at 2pm and 7pm; Sunday, March 9 at 2pm

For tickets and information call, 647-996-7755 or 647-962-6433

Is 2014's first babynaryo about to be named on "Bet On Your Baby"?

Judy Ann Shares the Dreams That She has for her Children

Each and every parent has dreams for his or her own children. For "Bet On Your Baby" host Judy Ann Santos-Agoncillo, the dreams and wishes she has for her own kids, Yohan and Lucho, is simple—that they grow up to be good, with unwavering faith in God.

Judy Ann has also said that if ever her children decide to follow in her and her husband Ryan's footsteps, taking them into showbiz, she won't stop them.

"It's inevitable that they get exposure to this industry, especially since they see that this is their parents' career," she explained.

This Saturday (January 18) on "Bet On Your Baby," find out what the different dreams of the show's contestants are for their own kids.

Joining the show this weekend are three hopeful parents along with their babies. For Jimbo and She of Cavite, it is their dream for Baby RC Arguna to eventually decide to join showbiz. Parents Celo and Len Jumaquio from Tondo, Manila, on the other hand, dream that their son Baby Ashton will be able to complete his education. Baby Jay-jay Sapuras' paret's Gie and Jen from Malabon also have that same dream for their child.

Will one of these babies be able to bring home the grand prize of P1 million, making him or her the first babynaryo for 2014?

Catch "Bet On Your Baby," airing on Saturdays on ABS-CBN. For updates, visit and like "Bet On Your Baby" on Facebook (www.facebook.com/betonyourbabyph ;) and follow @betonyourbabyph on Twitter or betonyourbabyphilippines on Instagram. For comments on the show, don't forget to use the hashtag #BetOnYourBabyPH.



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* The supermodels do not come with the camera. They stay with me.

JAN - FEBRUARY 2014

L. M. Confidential

17

ENTERTAINMENT

Business • *Celebrities* • Gossip

Finally, Piolo and Toni in Starting Over Again

FALL in love all over again this Valentine's as Star Cinema, on its 20th anniversary, presents Starting Over Again – an Olivia Lamasan film featuring Piolo Pascual and Toni Gonzaga in their much-awaited first big-screen team up.



Since it kicked-off its 20th anniversary celebration, Star Cinema has produced and offered an eclectic line-up of quality films that celebrate the beautiful diversity of Pinoy life. The anniversary of Star Cinema will never be complete without a movie by Olivia Lamasan who is

arguably one of the most accomplished master storytellers of the iconic film outfit. Starting Over Again is Lamasan's 11th movie with Star Cinema and the film once again showcases her brilliance as one of the country's most respected directors whose unmatched body of work consists of unforgettable storylines and realistic characters that have all been rightfully canonized as certified Filipino motion picture classics.

Starting Over Again is a different kind of love story as it takes the huge risk of debunking the prevailing notion that for every romantic film, everything should end-up happily ever after for its characters. The film aims to communicate the fact that every choice in life has a rippling effect that one must inevitably accept and not everyone is blessed with a second chance to love.

Starting Over Again is centered on Ginny (Toni Gonzaga) and Marco (Piolo Pascual) who are former lovers with a major unfinished business to settle in their relationship.

This is the highly anticipated film collaboration between Piolo and Toni who are two of the biggest stars of ABS-CBN. Piolo and Toni worked together 13 years ago in a popular TV commercial where Piolo was the object of a young Toni's desires. Toni's famous line, which she shouted to the top of her lungs, "I love you Piolo" remains to be one of the most infectious taglines ever delivered in the history of Philippine advertising.

Since the run of their TVC, Piolo and Toni pursued their individual careers. Piolo continued his prodigious acting career as "Ultimate Leading Man" of the industry. He is a multi-awarded actor and one of the country's top product endorsers. Piolo appeared in some of the finest Filipino films ever made and his most recent achievement is his superb performance in the film OJT. Toni on the other hand, metamorphosed from an aspiring young actress to being a Box-Office Queen of Philippine movies. Today, Toni has a huge and powerful fan-base and she is regarded as The Ultimate Multi-Media Star who has conquered not only the movies but television and music as well.

In Starting Over Again the wait is finally over, as Piolo and Toni reunite for the very first time in a long overdue romantic comedy.

Can love be rekindled after much pain and heartache? Is there such a thing as true love and destiny? When is a relationship worth saving? Discover all the answers in this upcoming romantic comedy. Starting Over Again is showing nationwide in all cinemas this Valentine.

Geoff Eigenmann Poses For Men's Health Magazine After Losing Weight

Months after being absent from television and movies because of receiving the "fat memo" from the management of GMA-7, actor Geoff Eigenmann is back on track with a new show for the Kapuso network and a cover for Men's Health magazine January 2014 issue.

Geoff started losing weight after the network advised him to do so. He found a mentor in Erwin Tagle, the owner of Ultimate Fitness Gym in Metrowalk, Pasig.

When he started focusing on his weight, Geoff didn't intend to lose weight but to just go to the gym and start working out. His interest was piqued by such activities as mixed martial arts, Jiu jitsu, Muay Thai, boxing and other contact sports.

On the first day of his workout in the gym, a fitness instructor approached him and told him he looked like "Geoff Eigenmann." That's when the actor realized he does not look like his old self anymore.

"At first it was hell, and then I decided to start enjoying what I was doing here, enjoying the workout."

Boxing has always been a part of Geoff's activities even in high school. So when he started doing this in the gym, it was easier for him to focus on conditioning too.

When he got used to working out, Geoff started joining the fighters when they had wrestling classes and other contact activities. Almost all of the activities he is doing are full body workouts.

Jiu jitsu, for example, does not require too much exercise since the fighters just roll around on the floor. However, the actor said it is still considered a full body workout.

These workouts are also essential training for future roles like his character in the GMA-7 teleserye "Adarna." The first option for his role there was to be a basketball player but because the producers knew he's doing MMA, they shifted to that instead.

"So, ganun siya. So, it's usable, especially, pag kunwari action show, action movies. I can do more stuff na 'cause I know I'm healthier. I know I'm capable of doing things physically and mentally."

In the future, Geoff wanted to be part of MMA even as an amateur only. To do that, he has to be 155 pounds the most.

Geoff then talked about the fat memo that he got from GMA-7. He said he was expecting that memo already so when it arrived, it wasn't really surprising for him.

He wasn't even devastated by it, the actor added. He also said the note just pushed him to do something about his weight, which he started noticing already.

Asked for the reason as to why he gained so much weight, Geoff said it's probably because he lacked the time to really stay fit and focus on his health. In about two years, the actor gained 30 pounds.

Because of the number of shows he was doing back then, he has no time to go to the gym and commit himself to getting fit. "So, I needed time. That's basically the number one thing. Plus, lagi akong puyat sa taping."

Now that he has started losing weight, Geoff said he just focuses on avoiding fastfood, sodas and juices. He also avoids foods with sugar and eats more times a day to keep the metabolism going.

As for his girlfriend Carla Abellana, Geoff said she never complained about his weight or even his beard. In fact, he said she was one of the driving forces behind his road to fitness.

He also said he's happy for Carla's success in "My Husband's Lover," wherein she played the role of Lally, the wife of a closet homosexual.



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Lakambini ng Turismo 2014



FIRST, Harold Guarin of Roadsport Honda (3RD FROM RIGHT) enjoy the show with friends. SECOND, Raffy Policarpio of LBC Cargo poses with Lakan Marco Raqueno. THIRD, Action Honda's Manager Rafael Nebres looks on as Keesha Cerezo is crowned 2nd runner-up at the Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 pageant.

MANILA -Five Roman Catholic bishops yesterday stormed heaven with prayers when they implored the intercession of God for the release from detention and swift recovery of ailing former president and now Pampanga Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The five — Archbishop Rolando Tirona of the Diocese of Nueva Caceres in Naga City; Bishop Nerio Odchimar of Tandag, Surigao del Sur; retired Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan of Cagayan; Bishop Emilio Marquez of Quezon and Bishop Ramon Villena of Nueva Vizcaya – jointly officiated a Mass for Arroyo as they joined various religious and political leaders in visiting the former chief executive at her VMCC quarters.

Arroyo was joined in the mass by son, Camarines Sur Rep. Diosdado Macapagal-Arroyo and his family; lawyers Raul Lambino and Larry Gadon and a handful staff of her staff.

In his homily, Villena said the Catholic leaders came to “encourage and help strengthen” Arroyo’s faith that she may continue to “fight for truth and justice.”

“They came to show their authentic friendship to someone who is suffering from sickness and injustice and to share their love and compassion to somebody who is being harassed and persecuted,” said Lambino, congressional chief of staff of the former president.

Lambino said Arroyo was overwhelmed by the church leader's visit. She served vegetables and fish as she invited them for lunch at the hospital suite where the former president had been placed under detention for nearly two years now.

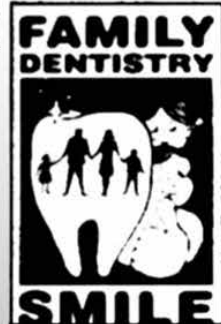
A staff of the Pampanga lawmaker said police security men used to allow Arroyo to hear Mass at the VMCC chapel but this was taken away from her last December for still unknown reasons.



Krista Bella poses with her family after winning the Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 title.

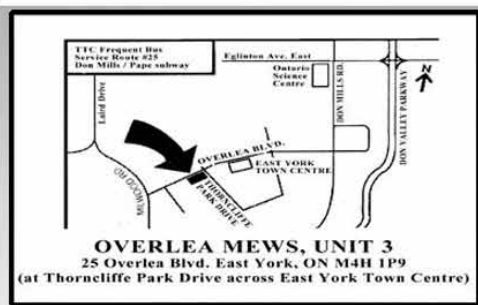
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Marian Rivera’s great 2014 start + other stories



Like her fictional character Darna, Marian Rivera is flying high again, now that she has been named “Most Favorite Foreign Actress” in an online poll of Vietnam’s Today TV Face of the Year Awards last January 8.

Marian was also nominated Best Actress in a Leading Role for “Temptation of Wife” at the Asian Television Awards in Singapore last December.

“Nakakatuwa di ba? Masaya kasi hindi ko lubos isipin. Kasi can you imagine na minamahal ka ng tao na hindi mo kalahi?” Marian said at the press conference of her newest GMA teleserye “Carmela.”

Aside from gracing the covers of various local magazines, Marian made it to the cover of FHM Thailand’s January 2014 issue. The actress also revealed that “Endless Love” is now showing in Africa.

2014 has just started and everything seems to be going well for Marian. She revealed that she had the opportunity to choose the project she would like to do, as well as who she would like to be her leading man in “Carmela.”

“In fairness to GMA, nilatagan nila ako ng apat na kwento ng soap opera. Pinapili talaga nila ako ng gusto kong gawin at “Carmela” ang napili ko.”

Marian, 29, handpicked Alden Richards, who is seven years her junior, to play her leading man Yago.

Marian and Alden have worked together in “Panday” and “My Beloved,” which also starred her boyfriend Dingdong Dantes.

Anne Curtis, the oldest to play Dyesebel at age 29

Kapamilya star Anne Curtis realizes her longtime dream to play Dyesebel, never mind if she is the oldest to portray the classic mermaid created by Mars Ravelo. Anne is turning 29 in

February.

Most of the previous actresses who played Dyesebel were much younger. Edna Luna was 19 when she played Dyesebel under the direction of Gerry de Leon; Vilma Santos was also 19, while Alma Moreno was 18 when they played the much coveted role. The others were a little older when assigned the mermaid role: Charlene Gonzales was 22, Alice Dixson was 23 while Marian Rivera was 22.

The recent announcement made by ABS-CBN that Anne Curtis has been chosen to play Dyesebel was a big surprise to all (actually, it surprised even Anne herself who just arrived from a vacation in Canada when she was told of the project).

Anyway, Anne revealed, “It’s another dream come true for me. I’ve really wanted to play Dyesebel since my younger days. I watched all the Dyesebel movies. I’m sure it will be a fun experience for me and my co-stars Sam Milby and Gerald Anderson.” Sam, who’ll be playing a syokoy, said “I’ll playing something new, mas mahirap, but it’s a good of the year for me.” Gerald also expressed excitement over the project and said “I’m very blessed to be part of this big project. It’s my first time to work with Anne.”

TV5 invades Canada

Pilipinas Global Network Limited (PGNL), TV5’s international arm, expands its reach in Canada as it partners with major cable service providers to bring TV5’s diverse range of quality programs to more Filipino homes.

Filipinos in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg can now fully enjoy watching all the shows on Kapatid TV5 via Shaw Cable. On the other hand, those who live in Ontario and Quebec can tune in to both

Kapatid TV5 and Aksyon TV International via Rogers Cable and Bell Fibe.

Judy Ann to host ABS New Reality Show For Couples

Acclaimed actress and TV personality Judy Ann Santos-Agoncillo was revealed as the host of “I Do,” a reality show originally conceptualized by ABS-CBN that will feature couples who want to tie the knot.

Judy Ann led the ribbon-cutting ceremony, blessing, and tour of the “I Do” Village where the participating couples will reside and their relationship be tested before facing the altar.



“This village was especially built for this show. We will give the couples challenges not to break them apart, but to strengthen their relationship so they become more mature in dealing with life,” said Judy Ann.

Judy Ann hopes that the program will guide the participating couples and make them get to know each other better by immersing them in possible situations they may encounter if they get married. Viewers will track their progress as cameras will record their every move 24/7.

“This is the first time I’m doing a show that’s similar to ‘Pinoy Big Brother,’ but this is ‘PBB’ times five. All issues will be tackled here – from having kids, living with the in-laws, to expenses. We hope we inspire couples and show them that marriage is an eternal vow and a commitment,” she said.

Aside from hosting the program, Judy Ann will also sit as member of the council as a home-maker, along with love and family experts who will give advice to the participating couples.

“I feel tense because I’ve only been married for five years, so my ability to give advice and share my experiences will be tested. I’m glad that I’m doing a show no one has ever done before,” shared Judy Ann.

The reality show’s winning pair is off to a good start as husband and wife because they will be rewarded with a grand wedding, a honeymoon package, a new car, a house and lot, and P1 million.

Judy Ann has headlined several hosting projects including reality shows “Junior MasterChef Pinoy Edition” and “MasterChef Pinoy Edition,” for which she won the Best Reality Show Host award at the PMPC Star Awards for TV. Judy Ann is the current host of top-rating game show “Bet On Your Baby” that is close to her heart as a mother.

Barbie Xu asks: What is ‘Got To Believe?’

News about the second chapter of the hit series “Got To Believe” has reached Taiwan,



with none other than Taiwanese actress Barbie Xu herself, famous for playing the role of San Chai in the hit TV series “Meteor Garden,” asking about the show.

Barbie took to Twitter to relate how she has been receiving messages about the local drama, including queries on a Chinese micro-blogging site.

“Is there Meteor Garden Philippines version? Because I am getting a lot of messages even in weibo. What is got to believe? who is playing my role?” she asked via a post Monday.

Apparently, Barbie has taken her cue from several netizens that have been comparing the upcoming chapter of “Got To Believe” to “Meteor Garden,” noting supposed similarities in concept as based on a recently released “Got To Believe” trailer.

In it, Joaquin (played by Daniel Padilla) will leave Chichay (Kathryn Bernardo) to undergo an operation needed to remove a bullet stuck in his skull.

Someone also posted, “Yung sa meteor garden mas nagfocus sila sa shooting star. Etong got to believe sa moon. Right? Haha #similarities.”

Kathryn Bernardo was quick to defend the series, arguing on Twitter that added thrills are needed to keep the five-month-old series fresh.

She posted, “Kung walang ipapasok na bago walang trill (sic) na mangyayare. Lahat ng teleserye meron niyan. Please stop that hashtag.”

“Oo masasaktan tayo kasi hindi na sina Chichay at Joaquin. Pero syempre kaylangan natin tanggapin na may trill (sic) na mangyayare,” she added.

Daniel Padilla Guest Stars On “Gandang Gabi Vice” With Parents

Teen king Daniel Padilla will be a guest on “Gandang Gabi Vice” together with his parents, Karla Estrada and Rommel Padilla.

Karla and Rommel have been separated for years, but have remained friends for their son.

This is the first time Rommel will be guesting with Daniel and Karla, although the mother-son tandem has guested in some shows several times. In the episode, Rommel and Karla will share how they raised the teen king and how happy they are now for the success he has been experiencing.

Rey “PJ” Abellana Wants To Get To Know Geoff Eigenmann Better

Rey “PJ” Abellana has been vocal about not wanting daughter Carla to settle down for now since she is still enjoying a fruitful career.

He said though that he cannot stop Carla and her boyfriend, Geoff Eigenmann, if they want to

Lakambini ng Turismo 2014



LEFT, ,Jenifer Camacho, Elsie Altamirano and Scarborough Toyota’s Manny Yanga pose with 2nd runner up Denice Raagas (CREATIVE PHOTO). THIRD, 3rd runner-up Denice Raagas, 1st runner-up Alison Garcia, Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 titlist Krista Bella and 2nd runner-up Keesha Cerezo pose after the coronation. PHOTO BY BONG MOLANO



tie the knot already.

Asked if he's okay with Geoff being Carla's husband, Rey PJ cannot directly answer the question. He said that it's hard for him to answer whether or not he likes Geoff because he never really gotten to know him.

He only sees him in official family functions like last Christmas, but he never bonded with Geoff yet. Rey PJ clarified that Geoff is very respectful and he seems to make his daughter, Carla, happy.

"Close naman siya sa akin. Okey naman siya. Although hindi kasi kami nagkakatiy-empuhan na... very seldom yung instances na nagkikita kami."

The former matinee idol, on the other hand, believes Carla can decide for herself what's wrong and right to do at this time. Carla graduated as cum laude at the De La Salle University in Taft, Metro Manila. She took up BS Psychology.

Rey PJ is not closing any doors when it comes to politics because it still depends on the situation. If he ever enters politics, he wants for it to be the right time and the right reason.

"Pero kung hindi naman, okay lang. Siguro, ibig sabihin lang, hindi ka para sa larangang 'yan.'"

Luis Manzano Kisses Angel Locsin In Dubai

It seems Luis Manzano and Angel Locsin are a couple again if this photo posted by the actor on his Instagram page is any indication.

In the photo taken in Dubai, Manzano can be seen kissing a smiling Locsin.



Manzano and Locsin are in the United Arab Emirates along with other Kapamilya stars for an

"ASAP" show at the Dubai Festival City.

The photo comes after Locsin admitted on national television she still loves Manzano, her former boyfriend. Locsin just recently broke up with Azkals team captain and

commercial model Phil Younghusband but said that Manzano is not the reason for this breakup.

She said she really loved Younghusband when they were together and that she did not ever cheat on the football star with other men, including Manzano.

Dingdong Dantes Is Excited To Work With Maricel Soriano

Kapuso primetime actor Dingdong Dantes said he is excited to work with Diamond Star Maricel Soriano if rumors about their impending project for GMA-7 is true. There is no confirmation yet if the project will push through, but Dingdong said he's looking forward to all the projects he will be doing this year.

He received so many blessings in 2013, so he uses these things to be more inspired in his work. He also met a lot of people last year who he was able to talk to and plan projects with.

But his job as an actor is just one aspect of himself, Dingdong said, adding that he still has his personal life, family and lovelife.

There should be a balance in everything, the actor added.

"Isang malaking karangalan sa akin na makasama siya sa isang show, kung sakali pong totoo," he said of Maricel.

He is very thankful to GMA-7 for always trying to find respectable and bankable artists for him to work with. Will he be doing another drama project? Although Dingdong believes in variety, he added that drama is the genre very close to a lot of Filipinos.

Asked if he will be hosting a show, Dingdong said there's no word on that yet now, but he trusts GMA-7 to decide on the right project for him.

There are a lot of concepts he is tinkering with for this year, but there is no final work yet on these projects. "Minsan, may opportunity na biglang susulpot na mas urgent."

Dingdong and his girlfriend Marian Rivera wanted to do a movie together under the actor's production house. But the actor said nothing's sure yet until the camera starts rolling.



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Stars tackle the real value of family in “The legal Wife”+ other stories

The Filipino Channel’s upcoming drama series “The Legal Wife” will not just heat up worldwide television with fierce confrontations but with real-life issues as well, according to top caliber directors Rory Quintos and Dado Lumibao.

“We want to make sure that our audience will follow our show not only because of the slapping scenes, but also because, through these, they learn how to deal with the problems of their own families which they have been



afraid to face,” said Quintos about the series top-billed by Angel Locsin, Maja Salvador, JC de Vera, and Jericho Rosales. “Many viewers will be able to connect with the characters of Monica (Locsin), Nicole (Salvador), Max (de Vera), and Adrian (Rosales), because their personal battles are true-to-life. “The Legal Wife” is about the love and sacrifices that a person is willing to go through for the sake of his family,” Lumibao explained.

Meanwhile, Locsin, Salvador, de Vera and Rosales revealed that the story of “The Legal Wife” also made them discover a lot about themselves.

“Everyone has already experienced how to love and make mistakes. Because of my character Monica, I realized that I need to be strong in order to face all the trials in my life, especially if my family is affected,” said Locsin.

For Rosales, the plot of “The Legal Wife” will serve as a huge eye-opener for Filipino families. “Infidelity is such a sensitive topic, but I believe that this is the right time to make everyone understand why this happens, and why people end up in this situation,” he said.

Salvador added that while her character in the series is controversial, she believes that many people will be able to relate with Nicole.

“There are many kinds of love, but there is this kind where somebody accepts your whole personality despite of the things that you did in the past,” she shared.

“I appreciate love for my family and for others now, more than ever because of my character Max’ ability to give everything he has got without asking for anything in return,” de Vera said.

“The Legal Wife” features the story of Monica and Adrian, a married couple whose lives are about to turn around because of a huge mistake. How will Monica and Adrian be able to fulfill the promise of forever when the foundation of their relationship is already shattered?

Also part of “The Legal Wife” cast are some of the country’s best drama actors including Joem Bascon, Ahron Villena, Rio Locsin, Mark Gil, Maria Isabel Lopez, Bernard Palanca, and Christopher de Leon.

Don’t miss the premiere of “The Legal Wife” on Monday (January 27) on TFC worldwide.

Katrina Halili dives into Business

Kapuso actress Katrina Halili admitted she faced some financial struggles in the past, especially last year when she had to stop working because she was pregnant.

The actress said her struggles were doubled because she invested in a diving resort in Palawan. The cost of the diving resort amounted to P5 to P6 million. The resort is managed by Katrina’s sibling.

Katrina said she didn’t think about her monthly bills and that’s why she struggled financially after the establishment of the resort. Luckily, she was able to strike a deal with GMA-7 that she gets her monthly salary.

Since Katrina renews her contract with GMA yearly, she can only gets her salary at the end of the year. This time, she talked with the management and arranged for her to get something every month.

She also admitted to applying for loans and borrowing money before. But now, Katrina said all her debts have been settled already.

Her diving resort currently has four rooms, and is operational already. Katrina, however, said she still plans to add to the business, so that it will be more profitable.

But the actress said she wants to take a break first from the diving resort. “Sabi ko, ‘Sandali lang, pakitain muna natin, tapos pahinga muna ako, relax lang, chill. Chill muna tayo.”

She has no regrets though since it’s an investment that will bear fruit in the end. Besides, that lot was theirs to begin with, so she doesn’t have to pay

a rental fee or what not.

There are many blessings for Katrina these past years, she said, adding that the most important is her daughter with singer Kris Lawrence. They named her Katrence or Katie.

She also has a new contract with GMA-7. In fact, that contract was offered to her before she became pregnant. When she found out about the pregnancy, she informed GMA-7 that she cannot sign the contract anymore. She was surprised they insisted on her staying with the network.

She reached an agreement with the network that while she isn’t working, her contract will stop. Once she resumed work, it will run again.

“Tapos, tuwang-tuwa ako, kasi parang sabi ko, naging blessing. Siguro dahil tinanggap ko na okay lang kahit mawala na lahat, nandiyan naman ang baby ko, may baby naman ako.”

Katrina believes the Lord will not give her any problem she cannot surpass. She has been through a lot, she said, and if there’s one thing she learned, it is to just trust that He has something good in store for everyone.

John Lloyd Cruz Plays Developmentally Delayed Person In New Movie

ABS-CBN’s prized actor John Lloyd Cruz will play a developmentally delayed person in a new movie that will be directed by Chito Rono for Star Cinema.

Although the term most commonly used for this type of mental illness is “mentally retarded,” Lloydie said the politically correct term was “developmentally delayed or DD.”

The actor said this is different from Gerald Anderson’s character in the teleserye “Budoy” because one would not notice immediately a person who is developmentally delayed. Not unless that someone would engage in a conversation with a person with DD would he/she know that the person is mentally retarded.

Lloydie has already begun researching about this mental illness so that he can enrich his character more. He is hoping that once the camera starts rolling, he can learn more from his director and writer regarding the character.

Lloydie will star alongside Richard Gomez, Jessy Mendiola and Gretchen Barretto in this movie. He is not sure yet if Enrique Gil will be a part of the project.

Since they have just started filming, Lloydie said he cannot give more details about the movie because he’s only starting to learn about it. Also, he doesn’t want to disappoint the fans if ever something goes wrong with the project and it has to be scrapped.

All he knows is who the final cast would be and the director. But still, Lloydie is hesitant to give more information because even the cast can still change.

“Nahihiya rin kami sa fans na umaasa, na parang, ‘O, akala ko ba sinabi mo na may project ka with this actor, this actress?’ Tapos, hindi nangyayari.”

Back in 2013, there were rumors that Lloydie will be making a movie with Anne Curtis and Piolo Pascual. The actor said he’s not sure if this project will still push through because his focus right now is his sitcom “Home Sweetie Home” with Toni Gonzaga, and the movie with Richard.

He explained that most artists are willing to wait for the right project, adding that they are not the only ones who make decisions whether a project is ripe for the picking or not.

There are writers, creators and directors to consider, Lloydie added. “So, unfortunately, hindi lang kami ang may say kung dapat maghintay ang projects na ‘yan.”

Anne and Lloydie were involved in a nasty controversy in November last year wherein the actress called the actor an “addict” and slapped him in front of many people in an exclusive bar in Taguig City. Both parties did not divulge the reasons for the incident, only saying they have already apologized and moved on from the issue.

Philippines



The now abandoned house that used to streamed live sex acts of children to paedophiles watching online overseas, is seen in the village of Ibabao in Cordova town, Cebu province in central Philippines on January 21, 2014.

Cebu is Cybersex Hot Spot

CORDOVA, Cebu—In the remote village of Ibabao here, toddlers played oblivious at a nursery as the house next door became part of a horrifying child pornography ring, with live footage of children performing sex acts being streamed online to pedophiles around the world.

The depraved scenes in the bungalow were being repeated in many homes throughout the secluded community, where Internet child pornography had for some of its 5,000 residents become more lucrative than fishing or factory work.

“In the beginning, I was shocked. I could not believe this was happening in my town,” Mayor Adelino Sitoy of Cordova in Cebu province told Agence France-Presse (AFP) last week, shortly after police announced they had cracked a global live-streaming pedophile ring in which Ibabao was a key source of the child pornography.

But while the village is currently in the spotlight, authorities and child rights advocates say the fast-growing global industry is infecting many parts of the mostly poor Philippines, with thousands of children having been abused.

At first look, the coastal community of Ibabao is a typical close-knit rural village, where many of the longtime residents are relatives or enjoy close and longstanding ties.

In scenes echoed across the devoutly Catholic country, its residents regularly attend Masses held in quaint chapels along narrow footpaths and dirt roads.

They said “cybersex dens” remained in operation, but security fears and the Filipino tradition of not interfering with a neighbor’s affairs helped to ensure that people did not pry further or try to stop it.

Homemaker Jennifer Canete, 38, was willing to talk openly about the crimes, confirming many people in the community were involved and that she feared her four young children could become victims.

Authorities say they do not know exactly when the trade arrived in Ibabao.

Families Happy with candidates



LEFT, 3rd runner-up Denise Raagas poses with her family at the conclusion of the Lakambini ng Turismo 2014 pageant.



RIGHT, 2nd runner-up Keesha Cerezo poses with her family.

PHOTOS BY BONG MOLANO

DONORS
continued from page 1

but I think donors see our political will. We keep our fingers crossed that they will cover the gap,” she said.

Garin said at present, the Philippines is getting contraceptive donations from the United Nations Population Fund.

In 2002, barely a year after former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced that it would stop donating contraceptives to the Philippines by 2004.

The USAID, then the Philippines’ largest

contraceptive donor, felt that the country was relying too much on donations.

Arroyo was also against the procurement of contraceptives by the national government.

**High
time to buy
contraceptives**

To prepare for a 100-million population, Commission on Population executive



director Juan Antonio Perez III has underscored the need to buy contraceptives as soon as possible.

Perez said contraceptive use in the

country must reach 65 to 70 percent to cope with the increase in population.

“But right now, the use of contraceptives is only at 49 percent,” he said, adding that doctors will also have to be trained on vasectomy and tubal ligation.

“Very often these sterilization services are only available at the provincial level. We have to make sure that it is available even at the district level, even down to the barangay level,” he said.

Perez said there should also be an intensified information campaign on all types of reproductive health methods to assist couples who want to manage the size of their families.

Aquino welcomes Winter Escapees

ESCAPEES
continued from page 1

a cold spell.

President Benigno Aquino III welcomed to Malacañang the foreign “escapists”—the term used by Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario to refer to the Filipino-Canadian visitors who joined the first “Winter Escape—It’s More Fun In The Philippines” tour, a program started by the Department of Tourism and Department of Foreign Affairs to attract balikbayans (Filipino migrants).

“I didn’t expect that here in Malacañang, I would gladly welcome the ‘escapees,’” he said, adding in jest that when he talks of escapees, “most of the time I’m seated beside Secretary Leila de Lima of the Department of Justice, and we praise the apprehending [authority].”

Donning swimming gears



Ditching their layered winter garb, they donned their swimming gears and basked in the sun on the famous white sand and blue waters of Boracay Island in Aklan.

They also joined street dancing for the Ati-Atihan festival in Kalibo, Aklan, and the Pintados festival in Passi City, Iloilo.

The so-called journey of discovery also took the sun-starved visitors to Roxas City, Iloilo City and Guimaras province.

The visitors said they could not get over their frenzied encounter with fire dancers

and street dancers as well as school children and proud local officials who gave them a taste of the world famous Filipino hospitality.

Some recalled the “overflowing” buffet of Filipino dishes and delicacies, and partook of local concoctions such as pineapple wine.

Others were enthralled with the trade fair and crafts demonstration organized by local governments to give the visitors

ESCAPEES
continued on page 27

Ph1, MILF seal deal

MANILA – Once the documents are completed, a separate political entity called the Bangsamoro Political Entity will replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The peace agreement with the MILF is one of the cornerstones of the administration of President Benigno Aquino III.

The Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB), comprising four annexes, will be signed in Manila.

While other armed groups remain, turning the Moro rebel group into a government ally is seen as a key step to end the Muslim insurgency.

One rebel group vowed to keep fighting.

“We will continue the struggle,” said Abu Misri, spokesman of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement, which broke off from the MILF three years ago.

“What we want is an Islamic state, an Islamic people, an Islamic constitution,” he said.

A preliminary peace accord that was about to be signed in Malaysia was turned down in 2008 by the Supreme Court, sparking rebel attacks on Christian communities that provoked a major military offensive and shattered a ceasefire.

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Jennylyn Mercado, Mark Anthony Fernandez, Mark Herras and Yasmien Kurdi topbill GMA’s newest drama series Rhodora X

+ other news



GMA Network is once again innovating content as it showcases an edgy theme never been tackled on Philippine TV, that of living with someone who has Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID).

Beginning January 28, another compelling series will captivate the hearts of the Kapuso viewers as GMA Pinoy TV presents a highly-stimulating and thought-provoking drama through Rhodora X.

Rhodora X challenges us to review how deeply we know our loved ones. It is an invitation so difficult to refuse as it ushers us to discover the nuances of our own personal relationships.

The show stars Jennlyn Mercado, Mark Anthony Fernandez, Mark Herras and Yasmien Kurdi,

Rhodora X, created by the GMA Drama Group, is supervised by the SVP for Entertainment TV Lilybeth G. Rasonable; VP for Drama Redgie Acuña Magno, AVP for Drama Cheryl Ching-Sy, Program Managers Nini S. Matilac and Hazel F. Abonita and Executive Producers Rebya Upalda and Arlene Pilapil.

Find out how this intriguing story of Rhodora X unfolds starting January 28 only on GMA Pinoy TV.

It’s all About talking things Out for John Lloyd Cruz

According to John Lloyd Cruz’s character, Romeo, on the Kapamilya Network’s hit

sitcom “Home Sweetie Home,” even the big issues can be solved through calmly talking things out. The show’s main stars, namely John Lloyd and his on-screen partner Toni Gonzaga, recently talked about how “Home Sweetie Home” goes beyond being just for entertainment because it deals with social relevance. In this time and age when the country has been dealing with debate and controversy, his character’s stand on how to handle things can say something about how all these issues should be handled. According to Toni, the sitcom is right for solving problems in the sense that, as she says, “It is a timely program for timely happenings.”This Sunday (January 26), the newest favorite family sitcom will be showing Romeo’s real side. Along with his wife Julie (Toni Gonzaga), he encounters a problem with one of the people from the couple’s barangay because they noticed how one of the kids at the nearby school was being bullied. With everyone being defensive and hot-headed, the issue even reaches a point where there were threats of legal demands being filed—but because of this problem, Julie discovers exactly how mature her husband really is. Will this be what causes Julie to see the next step in the couple’s relationship? Are they ready to take things to a new level now that it seems that Romeo is turning out to be a great father figure? Find out on the next episode of “Home Sweetie Home,” airing this Sunday (January 26) at 6:45pm after “Goin’ Bulilit”. Don’t miss out on the other comedy shows of the Kapamilya Network on Saturday (January 25) as well, as “LUV U” airs after “ASAP 19” and “Banana Split: Extra Scoop” airs after “MMK”.



Kuya Kim Explores Disneyland with son and guest Host Jose

For the very first time, Kuya Kim Atienza’s son Jose guests in his multi-awarded educational program “Matanglawin” and joins him for a special adventure in Hong Kong Disneyland this Sunday (Jan 26). Watch their father-son bonding and see how Jose dragged his dad into trying out daredevil rides such as the 27-meter-high RC Racer and 25-meter-

high Parachute Drop. But little did Kuya Kim know that his “Matanglawin” team, family, and even Mickey Mouse prepared a birthday surprise that made the Trivia King cry. Watch these exciting and tearjerking moments this Sunday (Jan 26) in “Matanglawin,” 9:30 AM on ABS-CBN. For more updates, follow @ matanglawintv on Twitter or like www. facebook.com/matanglawintv.

Agot Isidro has high praise for Marian Rivera

Agot Isidro has done it all, from singing to hosting and acting. Fresh from her Best Actress win at the 39th Metro Manila Film Festival, the seasoned actress brings something new to the table once more as she breathes life into Amanda in Carmela: Ang Pinakamagandang Babae sa Mundong Ibabaw. GMANetwork.com caught up with the svelte and statuesque actress during the press conference of the upcoming GMA Telebabad series.

Agot told us more about her role and said, “Ako ‘yung mommy ni Carmela. Tapos noong bata siya, nagkahiwalay kami dahil napagbintangan at nakulong ako. Buong akala niya patay na ako so naghahanapan kami.” Carmela: Ang Pinakamagandang Babae sa Mundong Ibabaw marks the first on-screen collaboration of Agot Isidro and Marian Rivera. Of her co-star, she said, “Makulit siya, eh. Madali siyang kasama. She makes you feel very comfortable right away, pero ‘pag trabaho serious na serious siya. Masarap siyang kasama. Palaging masaya lang siya.”

What made Agot accept this project? She answered, “Una, maganda ‘yung project and then of course, malaking factor ‘yung opportunity to work with Yan-Yan, so I really wanted to work with her and see how she is. I have no regrets at all.”The award-winning actress also mentioned that she avoids having pegs whenever she has a new role because she wants every portrayal to be all-original. She elaborated, “I always read the script and study the character. Gusto ko medyo iba ‘yung character ko from the previous ones that I’ve done. I put in little nuances and mannerisms. Even the look is different para lang there’s always something new to offer.” Catch Agot Isidro as Amanda in Carmela: Ang Pinakamagandang Babae sa Mundong Ibabaw beginning January 27 only on GMA Telebabad.



Bilibid now a ‘high-end subdivision’

MANILA - The New Bilibid Prison (NBP) maximum security compound – which houses high-risk criminals serving life sentences – has reportedly evolved into a “high-end subdivision,” according to a source at the Department of Justice (DOJ).

“You can’t help but ask if this is a prison or a subdivision for the rich,” said the official, who asked to remain anonymous.

The compound is in full view of the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) director’s office and outside its heavily guarded gates is the office of the superintendent.

BuCor is under the direct supervision of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima.

Since President Aquino assumed office in 2010, the bureau has had three different directors – former police general Ernesto Diokno, Gaudencio Pangillinan, and current director Franklin Bucayu.

Diokno and Pangillinan were removed after they were accused of being involved in anomalies in Bucor and the NBP.

Golf carts

The official said the rich prisoners have their huts air-conditioned and enjoy expensive liquor and the company of sex workers, called “tilapia,” at night.

“The smuggling of contraband never stopped, and it has gotten worse,” he said.

Wealthy inmates are seen driving around the 12-hectare penitentiary in golf carts, electric motorcycles and tricycles.

“There are about 40 golf carts in the compound. How they were brought in, you be the judge,” the source said.

The use of golf carts started during the term of Pangillinan.

“BuCor employees used two golf carts. Now, inmates drive the golf carts. The visitors also use the carts when they do not want to walk,” the official said.

If moneyed prisoners want to visit a place in the compound, they drive golf carts or electric motorcycles. “The rich ones, particularly the Chinese, have poorer inmates drive for them,” the source said.

The poor inmates are clad in orange prison uniforms, while the rich prisoners go around in branded shirts either given by visitors or “bought at the dress shop.”

“For a ‘special’ ride, you are charged P60. If you share the tricycle, it’s P20 per head. Isn’t it just like a subdivision? If you are rich, you have a car or a golf cart. For poor visitors, they get tricycles,” the official added.The source said alcohol and drugs continue to be brought into the NBP maximum security compound.

The sex workers charge P50,000 to P200,000 for their services. “Some of them are beautiful enough to be starlets on television,” the official said.

He said guns, ammunition, knives and grenades are like “toys” to the inmates. In 2012, a fragmentation grenade was lobbed at a group of prisoners who were jogging in the compound. Last year, three people were hurt when a grenade was lobbed in a mosque at the compound.

Taste of Broadway



Performers from the Filipino community should be commended for a spectacular show. Performers from Michael Masangkay, Ma-An Dionisio, Alvin Alba, Candace Santos, Karen Tan and Anna Rejante delighted the capacity crowd at the Richmond Hill Encore performance. PHOTOS BY RAYMOND SANTOS

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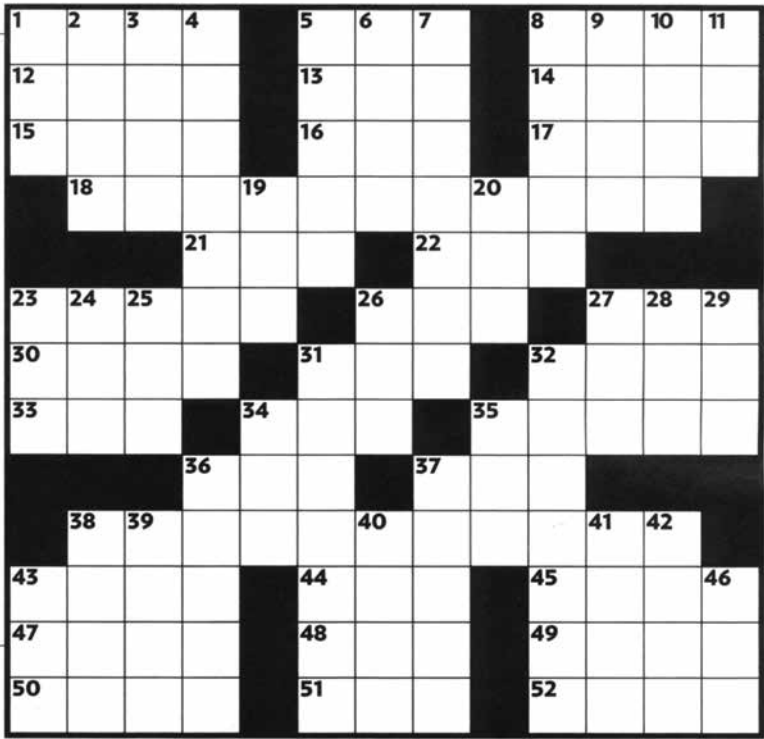
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Spotlight



Baguio Market Circa 1950's

Crossword Puzzle



Aiden (Beanie) Moroz's Christening at St. Peter's Church - Toronto on Dec. 1st, 2013. Proud parents Bryce and Lourdes, with godparents Oana and Ruth. Luncheon was held after at Park Hyatt Hotel (Yorkville). PHOTO BY ARIEL RAMOS

ACROSS

- 1 Omar ____ of House
5 "Til There ____ You"
8 Veronica ____ starred
18 Across
12 Jacob's wife
13 Blu Cantrell's "____ 'Em
Up Style (Oops!)"
14 Draft status
(wd. and ltr.)
15 Reese Witherspoon-
Mark Wahlberg thriller
16 Actress-director
Lupino
17 *The King and I* setting
18 Actress who provides
the voice of
Gossip Girl (2 wds.)
21 Shania Twain, ____
Eileen Regina Edwards
22 Nicolas Cage's
Leaving ____ Vegas
23 Actress Lively
(*Gossip Girl* costar
of 18 Across)

- 26 ____ Dawn (Patrick
Swayze drama)
27 Mary J. Blige's
"I ____ Love You"
30 Ages
31 Billy ____ Cyrus
32 Damon or Dillon
33 Filbert, for one
34 *America's Next*
____ *Model*
35 *Forgetting ____ Marshall*
stars 18 Across
36 Priestly vestment
37 Bette Midler film
____ *the Boys*
38 *Four Christmases* and
Fred Claus star (2 wds.)
43 Actor Badgley
(*Gossip Girl* costar
of 18 Across)
44 Lost colorfastness
45 Gosling or Reynolds
47 *Laugh-In* alum Johnson
48 *Pushing ____* with
John Cusack
49 Poet St. Vincent Millay

- 50 Indochinese republic
51 Stallone's nickname
52 Afternoon affairs

DOWN

- 1 Will Ferrell comedy
2 Glance furtively
3 Early *Tonight Show*
host Jack ____
4 Becomes smaller
5 Betty, Barry or Bryan
6 Friday, to Robinson
Crusoe, e.g.
7 Director Kubrick or
Kramer
8 Actor Gunn
9 Blue dye
10 *All the ____ Girls*
11 Actor Huntington
(*Fanboys* costar
of 18 Across)
19 "I'll ____ You in My
Dreams" by Giant
20 Billy Bob Thornton's
____ *Santa*

- 23 Kingsley or Stiller
24 Baseball's Gehrig
25 English singer
Adam ____
26 Lil Wayne's forte
27 Richard Pryor comedy
____ *Wash*
28 *One Day ____ Time*
(2 wds.)
29 To the ____ degree
31 *Duplicity* star Julia ____
32 Ann-____
34 "No Scrubs" trio
35 Without a ____
(penniless)
36 Hathaway and Heche
37 Ingmar Bergman's
____ and Alexander

- 38 Miles, Zorina or Wang
39 *He's Just Not*
That ____ You
40 Colorado ski town
41 Jekyll and ____
42 *Peter Pan* pooch
43 Hayworth-Sinatra
musical ____ *Joey*
46 "I Can" rapper

Answers on
Page 26

Confidentials

FEATURETTES *People & Parties* LIFE HEALTH ARTS

PAULEEN
continued from page 8

mabibili niya, anything naman mabibili ko,” dagdag ng star ng The Borrowed Wife.

Sa huli, nilinaw ni Pauleen na hindi ibig sabihin na mabibili niya lahat ay mayaman na siya. Bagkus, masipag lang daw talaga siya sa pagtatrabaho kaya mabibili niya kung ano man ang naisin niya.

Patuloy na subaybayan si Pauleen bilang Tessa sa The Borrowed Wife, weekdays after Magkano Ba Ang Pag-ibig? on GMA Afternoon Prime.

Bea Binene on Jake Vargas: “I value his own little ways of making me happy”

Nakapanayam ng GMANetwork.com si Bea Binene sa set visit ng Vampire Ang Daddy Ko last January 9 at nagkuwento ang young Kapuso actress tungkol sa kanyang showbiz boyfriend, si



Kapuso actor Jake Vargas.

Magkasama ang dalawa noong New Year countdown ng GMA sa Seaside Boulevard ng Mall of Asia. Ayon kay Bea, iyon ang ikalawang New Year nila na magkasama.

Walang alinlangang sinabi ni Bea na espesyal si Jake sa pagiging siya at tanggap niya nang buong-buo ang kanyang boyfriend.

Sabi pa niya, “I value his own little ways of making me happy and inspiring me each and every day.”

May couple shirt na ibinigay si Jake sa kanya at pinakakaingatan ito ng dalaga. Buong pagmamalaki rin na ikinuwento sa amin ni Bea na si Jake raw ang tipo ng lalaki na bigla na lang magsasabi ng pick-up lines at sweet words out of nowhere.

“Minsan corny siya. ‘Yong mga jokes niya corny pero nakakatawa in fairness. Hindi siya masyadong nagbibigay ng sobrang mahal na gifts pero it’s the thought that counts. Nag-effort siya at he makes time for you talaga.” Sa part naman ni Bea, ito ang ginagawa niya: “Pinapakita ko sa kanya that I appreciate everything he does. Kunwari he did something special, kahit papaano gumagawa rin ako ng something special. Sinusuklian ko naman.”

GMA LIFE TV serves up the best in Filipino TV this 2014



With a rich and vibrant mix of program genres, GMA Life TV continues to celebrate the best in Filipino lifestyle as it unveils its latest lineup for 2014.

Fashion and reality television enthusiasts alike will be delighted as GMA Life TV, in partnership with One Mega Publishing Group, brings the second season of MEGA Young Designers Competition to Filipino homes abroad. The competition heats up as viewers tune in to see which of the country’s talented aspiring fashion designers will make the cut.

GMA Life TV also spices up its culinary offerings with the premiere of the Appetite Wars hosted by Victor Aliwalas and Victor Basa. This cooking competition produced by One Mega Publishing Group features chefs from all walks of life battling in the kitchen to impress their celebrity dinner guests. Furthermore, the channel continues to please its viewers’ palates with the latest episodes of Sarap Diva hosted by Asia’s Songbird Regine Velasquez-Alcasid and the multi-awarded cooking program, Kusina Master hosted by celebrity Chef Pablo “Boy” Logro.

Moreover, the country’s first international lifestyle channel amps up its first quarter with a double serving of drama as it begins airing English-dubbed versions of two well-loved GMA series – Little Star and Sinner or Saint.

Diego, a young singing sensation portrayed by promising child actor Nicky Castro, is the pivotal character in the heartwarming family drama Little Star. This fascinating story focuses on how he touches the lives of the people around him – a famous female singer, her personal assistant, a photographer and an opportunist. It also stars the multi-talented Kapuso artists Mark Anthony Fernandez, Jennylyn Mercado, Paolo Contis and Lovi Poe.

The enthralling series Sinner or Saint is a tale of love, deceit and betrayal featuring award-winning actor Dennis Trillo as Raul, an aspiring law student, and Bianca King as his childhood friend-turned-lover. Things turn awry as a tragic incident drives the two apart, testing their love.

Adding more fun and entertainment to late night

viewing is the The Medyo Late Night Show with Jojo A. hosted by Jojo Alejar. The show is a lively mixture of comedy skits with the addition of live guestings and a performance by an up-and-coming band.

Furthermore, GMA Life TV boosts its weekend movie offerings this February with Indie Fest, showcasing some of the finest local independent films. Airing on February 2, Ang Sayaw ng Dalawang Kaliwang Paa, featuring Rocco Nacino and Jean Garcia, combines dance and poetry in a social exploration of feminist and gay issues. Mayohan, a coming of age story set amidst the religious festivities in May starring Lovi Poe, will reach television screens on February 9. In Biyaheng Lupa airing on February 16, Eugene Domingo joins a motley cast of characters on a particularly revealing journey onboard a bus bound for Bicol. And on February 23, I-libings tackles the subject of life and death as it focuses on Isabel, played by Glaiza de Castro, interning as a funeral videographer.

In celebration of International Women’s Month this March, the channel presents five classic films featuring several of Philippine cinema’s premier dramatic actresses – Nora Aunor in Dash A Lotsa Nonsents! on March 2, Judy Ann Santos and Gladys Reyes in Kasal-kasalan... Sakalan on March 9, Vilma Santos in Pakawalan Mo Ako on March 16, Sharon Cuneta, Hilda Koronel and Angel Aquino in Crying Ladies on March 23, and Lorna Tolentino in Gaano Kita Kamahal on March 30.

Completing their first quarter line up, GMA Life TV offers Koreanovela aficionados a chance to watch the tagalog-dubbed series such as Full House and My Rosy Life that were big hits back home.

For more details and program information, visit the GMA International website www.gmanetwork.com/international, Facebook pages www.facebook.com/GMAPinoyTV, www.facebook.com/gmalifetv, and, www.facebook.com/gmanewsinternational, and Twitter pages @GMAPinoyTV and @GMA_LifeTV.



Relieving Stress

A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they’d be asked the “half empty or half full” question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: “How heavy is this glass of water?” Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz. She replied, “The absolute weight doesn’t matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it’s not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I’ll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn’t change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes.” She continued, “The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed – incapable of doing anything.” Remember to put the glass down.

Vilma to produce, direct films

Seemingly not content with being a superb actress and a respected politician, Vilma Santos-Recto is setting her sights on producing and directing films. “Given a chance na ano pa ang puwede kong magawa sa pelikula, talagang gusto kong mag-produce at saka gusto ko mag-direct,” the Batangas governor told Lhar Santiago in an interview for “Balitanghali” aired this Thursday. Santos-Recto recently won the “Best Actress” award in the Dhaka International Film Festival in Bangladesh for her portrayal of the lead character in the film “Ekstra” (The Bit Player). The actress said that she is really happy because of the award since it signifies that people recognize the work they have done for “Ekstra”.

Candid SPOOF (Pop-ups are not supposed to be taken seriously - EDITOR)



Philippine Courier publisher Mon Datol chats with a Anghel ng Tahanan candidate at last Christmas Christmas party at Cesar’s Fiestahan.

Crossword Answers

E	P	P	S	W	A	S	M	A	R	S
L	E	A	H	H	I	T	O	N	E	A
F	E	A	R	I	D	A	S	I	A	M
K	R	I	S	T	E	N	B	E	L	L
N	E	E	L	A	S					
B	L	A	K	E	R	E	D	C	A	N
E	O	N	S	R	A	Y	M	A	T	T
N	U	T	T	O	P	S	A	R	A	H
A	L	B	F	O	R					
V	I	N	C	E	V	A	U	G	H	N
P	E	N	N	R	A	N	R	Y	A	N
A	R	T	E	T	I	N	E	D	N	A
L	A	O	S	S	L	Y	T	E	A	S

ESCAPEES
continued from page 23

a wider panorama of potential investments in the country.

“Traveling with Filipino-Canadians and seeing them react to their memories are the best moments for me. I will never forget the smiles and all the helping hands everywhere. The time and resources spent in welcoming us are priceless,” said writer Charles Lavoie from Victoria.

Gwen Manning of the Toronto contingent said he could not believe the quality of every reception. “Extraordinary little souvenirs from our hosts were given nonstop. It would be fun to come back to learn more about the gentle nature of the Filipino people. This was an exceptional trip,” said Manning.

The visitors also had a chance to meet with victims of Supertyphoon “Yolanda” that flattened many areas in the Visayas last Nov. 8.

Ilonggos thanked the Filipino-Canadians for helping the city clear the roads of debris and providing emergency assistance in the storm’s aftermath.

Mr. Aquino himself expressed his appreciation to Canada for standing in solidarity with the Philippines during the disaster relief operations.

“The Filipino-Canadian community prevailed upon the Canadian government to render its utmost assistance in the tragedy that happened with Yolanda,” Mr. Aquino recalled saying in his conversation with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper in his remarks at the Rizal Ceremonial Hall in Malacañang.

“Previously, there was warmth

Hunk Shot

Jose is 15 years old and likes to play basketball. His favourite food is palabok and goes to school at St. Martin SS. He is the son of Jessica and Vicente. Someday, he wants to be an Architectural Engineer.



Jose Valdez

from the winter months. Now, there is warmth from the love that you have bestowed and shown to our countrymen. Again on their behalf, I thank all of you for this really tremendous effort that enabled us to overcome and continue to overcome the challenges besetting our country as we try to recover, reconstruct, rehabilitate, and build back better,” he said.

Official Canadian contribution to the emergency effort is estimated at US\$40 million, in addition to the private donations channeled through Canadian charities.

20 typhoons a year

“Typhoon ‘Haiyan’ or Yolanda was really bad and it came on top of several crises. You had the Zamboanga crisis; you had the Bohol-Cebu earthquake; you had Typhoon ‘Santi’ in between them. And then now you have Typhoon ‘Agaton,’” the President said.

“The Philippines is visited by about 20 typhoons every year. We have gone a long way. Now, we have a weather bureau who can actually tell you precisely where it will fall, what the wind strength will be, what the rainfall will be,” he said.

Canada is among the Philippines’ top 10 tourist markets, with 123,699 visitor arrivals in 2012.

The Philippines is one of Canada’s top sources of immigrants and temporary workers. Large Filipino communities are found in the cities of Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg.

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