

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” - Winston Churchill

PH not backing down over maritime rights

US to ‘invoke’ defense pact in attack on PH

Marcos vows to defend fishing areas for Pinoys

President Ferdinand Marcos on September 29 said the government will not back down and will continue to defend the country’s maritime territory and the rights of Filipino fisherfolk.

This is after he ordered the removal of the floating barrier that China set up in the West Philippine Sea to block local fishermen from entering Pa-

natag (Scarborough) Shoal.

“These are operational issues that I really cannot talk about. But in terms of taking down the barrier, I don’t see what else we could do because [it involved] our fishermen,” said

Mr. Marcos, speaking to journalists in Siargao.

The President said the Philippines was not looking to provoke anything in the area, but he said his administration will continue to defend the

country’s sovereign rights.

“We are not looking for trouble [but]... we will continue to defend the Philippines, the maritime territory of the Philippines, and the

MARITIME page 15



Postcard
Taft Avenue 1960s

PH allowed to use Canadian satellites vs ‘dark’ ships

Canada will help the Philippines find illegal fishing vessels and protect fish stocks.

Canada will give the Philippines free access to state-of-the-art satellites that will allow maritime enforcers to surveil, almost in real time, vessels within the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone.

The satellites will allow authorities to detect and track even “dark vessels,” or ships that have switched off their location transmitters to avoid detection, said Ottawa’s Ambassador David Hartman.

Aside from access to the Canadian satellites, Ottawa also dispatched another Halifax-class frigate to participate for the first time in the joint Philippines-US naval exercise “Sama-Sama” (All Together) from Oct. 2 to Oct. 13 in southern Luzon.

Canada will also be sending an active-duty defense attache to Manila for the first time beginning October as part of its efforts to bolster

the security partnership with the country. “We’ve seen a rise in behavior in the West Philippine Sea and the South China Sea that we have determined to be worrisome,” Hartman said onboard the HMCS Vancouver.

“I think it’s very clear how we stand. It’s unequivocal. The decision is final and binding,” he said, reiterating Canada’s support to the arbitral award of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016.

Hartman said they were “looking forward to imminently concluding” negotiations for the Dark Vessel Detection Program, which he said would “dramatically enhance Philippine maritime domain awareness.”

Illegal fishing
It will also support the Phil-

DARK SHIPS page 21

Why do we Filipinos celebrate Christmas for four months?



Love The Holidays? The Philippines Celebrates 4 Months Of Christmas Mania

The Philippines, which is a mainly Catholic country, is known as the only one that ushers in festivities from September

Dubai resident Vana Sprott has started dusting off an un-assembled fake pine tree to usher in a four-month-long Christmas tradition.

“As soon as the ‘ber months’ hit, it’s the start of the Christmas season for us,” she tells The National, referring to the last four months of the year, which end with “ber”.

Sprott, who has been in Dubai for almost seven years, is just one of the millions of Filipinos in and outside the South-East Asian country

who start yuletide celebrations as early as September.

“We would start putting up the Christmas tree and other decorations, playing Christmas music and thinking about the parties we are going to host and attend,” she says of her family in the Philippines.

CHRISTMAS p10

Carla Abellana not ruling out friendship with ex-husband Tom Rodriguez

Carla Abellana chose not to give a definite answer regarding the possibility of being



friends with her ex-husband Tom Rodriguez, claiming how "anything can happen."

The "Love of My Life" actress, during a press conference for her contract signing with All Access to Artists Inc. on Tuesday, Sept. 26, shared that she prefers to not set anything in stone, including the chances of a friendship with her former on- and off-screen partner.

"Kumbaga, sa buhay po, napakarami pong kaganapan na unpredictable. So, ayoko pong, kumbaga, tuldukan o maging definite sa anumang bagay. So, anything can happen. So, wala po akong gustong i-finish, i-finalize, i-set," said the 37-year-old Kapuso star.

Abellana, who said that she has more than moved on from her separation from the "Pinoy Big Brother" alum, is not worried about an encounter with Rodriguez, which, to her, is something that's "inevitable" for them, being part of the "same industry" and belonging to the same network.

"Of course, matagal ko na pong naisip 'yon [pagkikita nila ni Tom]. Na-prepare ko 'yung sarili ko. Parang wala na po. Wala na akong maramdaman kung sakali man pong mangyari 'yon or kung mangyari man na po yun," shared Abellana, who said she's confident she won't be overcome by either panic, fear, or sadness in the event that they see each other again.

Action Honda sponsors NVT Golf fundraiser to help severely developmentally and physically disabled children and adults



Rafael Nebres, General Manager for Action Honda; Brian Maslowski with Own It.ca (also President, NVT Board of Directors); and Maria Nebres with The FACTOR OF: Guiding Your Life's Best Masterpiece with Maria Nebres - together for a special cause in support of New Visions Toronto.

Action Honda and Rafael Nebres - thank you from New Visions Toronto, for your hole sponsorship, 2023 annual charity golf event!

New Visions Toronto (NVT) is a non-profit, charitable organization that provides housing, care, and support for children, adolescents and adults with complex developmental and physical disabilities.



"At least, kumbaga, kilala ko po ang sarili ko, parang ganu'n po. Confident na po ako na hindi naman po ako parang magpa-panic or matatakot, o malulungkot, parang ganon (At least, it's like, I know myself. I'm already confident that I won't, like, panic or be afraid, or feel sad)," she continued.

While she sees "no problem" being around her "My Husband's Lover" co-star in a professional setting, Abellana "[doesn't] think it's necessary" to "reach out"

to Rodriguez when they do meet again.

During her guesting on "Fast Talk with Boy Abunda" earlier in the year, Abellana also mentioned being granted a temporary protection order. Her lawyer, Atty. Peter Sanchez, who was also present in the interview, explained that just as his client has the right to "invoke the protection," she can also decide otherwise.

"If they're [Abellana and Rodriguez] in the same building, in the same locality, if she doesn't feel threat-

ened or, in any manner, uncomfortable, she can opt not to [invoke the protection]," clarified Sanchez.

In the same interview, Abellana also mentioned being "very happy" with her ex-husband's decision to file a "divorce decree" in the US, which Rodriguez — in a statement shared by his manager last year — said has already been finalized. She further shared that she had already filed a "petition for the recognition" of their divorce in the Philippines.

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Belle Mariano Enters Her Singer-Songwriter Era

Well-loved young star Belle Mariano found phenomenal success as an actress and as one-half of the popular DonBelle loveteam, but she’s not resting on her laurels. She’s bent on carving her own path and refining her creative skills in the world of music, too!

Belle Mariano is letting us all in into a different world she inhabits. This time around, she’s not the feisty yet softie Maxpein of He’s Into Her nor the pragmatic and hardworking Ayef of An Inconvenient Love. The Belle in DonBelle is making way for the singer-songwriter (and even producer) in her to shine.

Fresh from the release of her sophomore album *Somber* (a follow-up to her 2021 debut album *Daylight*), we meet Belle as a musician.

The pensive and sentimental album is a moody glimpse into the musicality that the young singer-songwriter is showcasing for this era, at least. “I wanted something that will connect to the previous album I’ve done. Gusto kong magkaroon ng parang storytelling na what’s next after *Daylight*? Of course, we have to go through the hardships of life in order for us to reach that Solemn [state],” Belle begins.

Belle’s sophomore album also marks her debut as a songwriter and producer as she gets credits for penning some of the songs in the album.

The actress-singer particularly gets songwriting credits on the tracks “Roadtrip” and “Somber & Solemn” and as co-producer on all songs of the album.

The song “Roadtrip” talks about compromises made in relationships and how it just can’t be done sometimes. When



values, lifestyles and destinies differ between people, the journey together sometimes ends.

“When it came to conceptualizing “Roadtrip,” doon talaga kami pinaka-nahirapan kasi we really needed something that would fit the album *Somber*. On the contrary, conceptualizing the song “Somber & Solemn” was described by Belle as “fun.”

“Co-writing this song with Jeremy G, Tricia Denise, Sir Rox and Cesca— it was such a fun process. The four of us were chatting about our faith. What if we write something about ‘huwag mong labanan iyong current, magpadala ka sa

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Life’s brighter under the sun



current.’ So the ocean symbolizes God. Sobrang funny kasi somehow na-relate knowledge about music and explore other areas where she could excel as a singer.

You don’t have to find anyone, you just have to find yourself and find the peace God gave you

In the future, she would love to collaborate with fellow artists like Moira, Sunkissed Lola, and of course, the artist Belle admires so much as a singer and as a storyteller— Taylor Swift. “I told earlier na I’m in my Taylor Swift era. Her brain when it comes to songwriting is just so amazing. Ang galing! Storyteller talaga siya. Ang galing niyang magsulat ng kanta, and I want to be like her someday. I’d like to be able to inspire people like her someday,” she dreamily gushes.

Belle might be busy with the album release and the concert but she will soon be seen through the series *Can’t Buy Me Love* opposite Donny Pangilinan.

Erik Santos’ ideal wife: ‘Basta maganda, understanding’

Erik Santos is not closing his doors on marriage and starting a family anytime soon, although he hopes to say “I do” to someone who is easy on the eyes and understanding when it comes to his job as a singer.

Santos opened up about the topic of marriage during an interview with reporters on the sidelines of his “milE-Stone” mediacon, per Inquirer Bandera, saying he’s “praying” that he would meet his “the one.”

“Siyempre po naman, hindi rin magandang mag-isa sa buhay. So hopefully, I’m really praying, in the near, near, near future na magkaroon na rin po ako ng sarili kong pamilya (Of course. It’s not nice to be alone in life. So hopefully, I’m really praying in the near, near future that I would have my own family),” he said.

The singer then listed down the characteristics of his ideal wife, where he pointed out that he wants to marry someone pretty.

“Siyempre, maganda. Kasi gusto mo namang gumising nang every morning na maganda ‘yung nakikita mo, ‘diba?” he said. “To be honest, siyempre, ‘yung

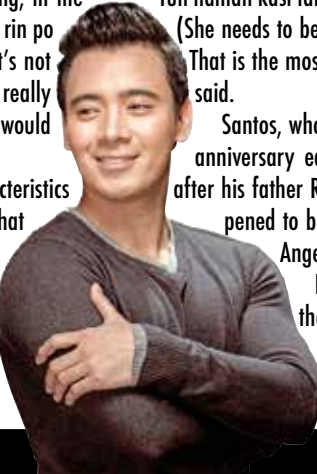
maunawaan ang trabaho ko at makakasundo ko at makakasundo ng personalidad ko. Makakapag-adjust ako at the same time, makakapag-adjust siya sa akin.”

(Of course, she needs to be pretty. We want to wake up next to someone who’s pretty, right? To be honest, of course, someone who understands my work, and will get along with me. Someone who’s willing to adjust to my work, and at the same time, adjust to me.)

“Kailangang maganda at maganda ang kalooban. ‘Yun naman kasi talaga ang pinakaimportante sa lahat (She needs to be beautiful from the inside and out. That is the most important of all),” Santos further said.

Santos, who recently marked his 20th showbiz anniversary earlier this month, made headlines after his father Renato died last August, which happened to be less than a year after his mother Angelita died in November 2022.

Following his father’s death, he thanked his loved ones and ABS-CBN colleagues for supporting his family during his “lowest point in life.”



David Licauco, Barbie Forteza could be the next Rudy Fernandez, Nora Aunor

Seasoned actor and former Laguna governor ER Ejercito had nothing but high praises for his “Maging Sino Ka Man” co-stars David Licauco and Barbie Forteza, who he said could potentially become the next big stars of the future, following the footsteps of Ace Vergel or Rudy Fernandez, and Nora Aunor or Vilma Santos, respectively.

Ejercito made the declaration during the press conference for “Maging Sino Ka Man” headlined by Licauco and Forteza. The TV series is a remake of the 1991 film starred in by now-senator Robin Padilla and Sharon Cuneta.

“As an action star, I highly believe that David Licauco can be the next Ace Vergel and the next Rudy Fernandez. I believe that David Licauco will be like them,” he said. The late action stars are known for their lead roles in action films from the 1970s to 1990s.

“I also believe that Barbie Forteza can be the next Nora Aunor or the next Vilma Santos for the new generation... Naniniwala akong malakas ang chemistry nina Barbie



at David. Sila ang next Nora-Tirso,” he said, referring to Aunor’s popular on-screen partnership with screen veteran Tirso Cruz III, who is now the head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

In response, Licauco appeared to be visibly delighted by Ejercito’s remarks.

“Siyempre, it’s a huge compliment for me. Maraming salamat,” he said. “At tsaka, si Gov (Ejercito), mukhang intimidating from the outside pero noong nagka-kwentuhan po kami, talagang maayos siyang kausap, humble despite ‘yung daming kanyang accomplishments sa buhay.”

The Kapuso star then admitted that he’s more of a “romantic” actor, noting that he has much to learn when it comes to learning the ropes of being an action star.

“Noong sinabi sa akin na full-fledged action series siya, to be honest, sa acting kasi, gusto ko ang romantic scenes. But then, nakita ko na ‘yung action ay merong acting din. Merong nuances kung paano siya gagawin,” he said.

Francine Diaz fans lament “ill-timed” interview with Andrea Brillantes at ABS-CBN Ball 2023

The ABS-CBN Ball 2023 held on Saturday, September 30. Kapamilya stars across generations walked the red carpet looking their glamorous best.

One of the head turners of the evening was young star Francine Diaz, who donned an elegant and sexy Val Taguba gown creation. For fans, the moment couldn't be more perfect for Francine to shine even brighter.

An incident, though, dampened their collective excitement, replacing that feeling of anticipation with dismay as they watched the program proceedings.



sure with what happened during Saturday's event.

Someone commented on X (formerly Twitter): "I hope that next time, everything is well organized and that all artists will have their spotlight as they walk on the red carpet."

"Fans waited for many hours to watch their idols walk on the red carpet, and even spent money, so their reward was a proper screentime for their idols."

As it turned out, fans of Francine and Andrea went at it on social media to defend their favorite stars.

Fans would go back and forth, with Andrea's fans arguing that their idol simply accommodated an interview and had no control over the technical aspects of the program.

Francine's fans, on the other hand, couldn't help but feel bad for the actress, saying that she deserved undivided attention from viewers.

Outside the tension, it's worth saying that Francine and Andrea both slayed the red carpet and stood out among the sea of stars in attendance that night.

STEALING THE SPOTLIGHT?

It happened during Francine's red-carpet moment at ABS-CBN Ball streamed live for viewers to see.

While Francine was having her moment on the red carpet, an inset of Andrea Brillantes being interviewed flashed on the bottom of the screen. This made fans upset as they felt that Francine's moment was snatched from her.

Adding fire to the issue was the history between the two Kapamilya stars.

It was no secret that Andrea had a romantic past with Francine's love team partner, Seth Fedelin.

Andrea admitted in the past that she and Seth were in a relationship for two years before mutually agreeing to split up.

Francine's supporters took to social media to air their displea-

Atasha Muhlach makes showbiz debut as E.A.T. host

Rising star and showbiz scion Atasha Muhlach made her showbiz debut on TV5's noontime program E.A.T. as the newest Dabarkad.

The Legit Dabarkads of E.A.T. gave a warm welcome to the daughter of Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzalez who has joined as a regular host.

The new host was unveiled through a performance number where Atasha showcased her stage charisma and flair for dancing just like her mom who used to host a dance-variety show.

"Gusto ko lang sabihin [na] magandang tanghali sa inyong lahat! Maraming-maraming salamat po. Sobrang masaya po ako to be here sa E.A.T. kasama ng legit Dabarkads!" Atasha concluded her introductory performance number with a message to the audience and her co-hosts.



E.A.T. main hosts Tito Sotto, Vic Sotto and Joey de Leon welcome Atasha Muhlach, the daughter of Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzalez to the Dabarkads family.

She added, "Maraming salamat po sa warm welcome and I'm really excited to be part of such a beautiful and kind-hearted family."

Atasha was also introduced as Tash, making her the youngest member of the artificial intelligence (AI) family, whose faces resemble the hosts and are also voiced by some of them.

On her debut day, she smoothly engaged in playful banter with the AI version of the comedic duo Jose Manalo and Wally Bayola, who were stationed outdoors at the time for the Sugod Bahay Mga Kapatid segment of the program.

Atasha thanked her parents in a sentimental message, "Marami akong gustong sabihin sa mga magulang ko pero maraming-maraming salamat sa lahat ng suportahan at love mula bata pa ako at mahal na mahal ko kayo. Thank you."

E.A.T. mainstay Joey de Leon also took to social media to welcome Atasha into their crew.

"Welcome our new Dabarkads, Atasha Muhlach! BUO na ang Dabarkads at yung anak ng ORIGINAL TITLE na pag-aari namin, the last three letters ay narito na!— Eat BulAGA! #TVJonTV5 #Legit-Dabarkads," the veteran comedian-host wrote in the caption along with the Dabarkads group photo.

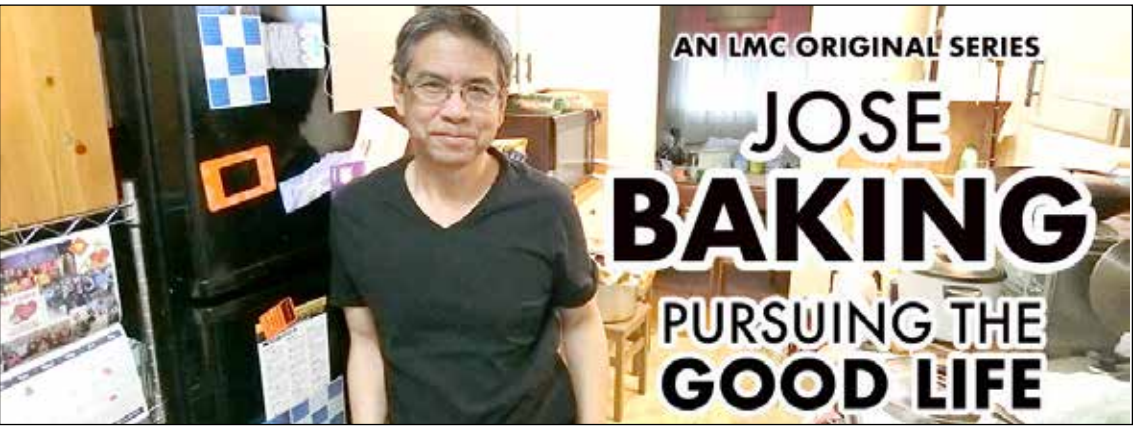
Atasha graduated with honors from her business degree at Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom. She officially entered the showbiz industry after signing with Viva Artists Agency last July. She said she wanted to try everything — hosting, singing and acting.

"This (performing) is something that I've always wanted to do ever since I was 10 years old when I did (the musical play) Sound of Music. That's when I realized that I really do love to perform. I love to sing,"

Aga had also previously told this paper that as a kid, Atasha was already showing interest in the field of her parents.

"I saw it in her really," the proud father said then of Atasha. "When we did our commercials before, when they were growing up, ang dami naming ginawa, nakikita ko sa kanyang mukha talaga, pag-tumitingin talaga siya. Tapos 'pag-sinabi ng director, 'Atasha, look to your left,' she knows... Parang she has it..."

"And gusto niya yan. School niya siya namili, saan niya gusto mag-aral, ano gusto niya gawin. Then she said she wanted to work already. So, I told her, go! Para maramdaman mo, makita mo."



Why Eddie Garcia Act should be passed right away, says Aiko Melendez

The safety and rights of workers in the entertainment industry should be a priority," said actress Aiko Melendez, who is appealing for the swift passage of the so-called "Eddie Garcia Act" in the Senate.

Seven months after its approval in the House of Representatives, Aiko said the Senate has yet to pass its version of House Bill No. 1270, a proposed legislation aimed at protecting workers and/or independent contractors in the film, television and radio industries.

The Eddie Garcia bill was passed in Congress in February with a total of 240 votes. It was created in honor of actor Eddie Garcia, who died in

June 2019 due to an accident while taping for a TV series.

Safe working environment

"As an actress, I've personally experienced and witnessed the challenges and dangers of working in our industry. I appeal to our colleagues in the Senate to give serious attention to this bill," said Aiko, who is also a Quezon City councilor.

She also pointed out that "there are a lot of independent actors and performers, or freelancers with unfixed salaries and benefits. Tito Eddie's untimely death underscored the need for a safe working environment for workers in our industry."



Toni Fowler asserts amid cybercrime suit: 'May kalayaan akong ariin ang aking sarili'

Toni Fowler said she is ready to face the criminal case filed against her by the Kapisanan ng Social Media Broadcasters ng Pilipinas Inc. (KSMBPI), and stressed that the group has no right to forbid her from expressing her sexuality through her contents.

The social media advocacy group has accused Fowler of violation of Article 201 of the Revised Penal Code in relation to the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012.

KSMBPI claimed that Fowler's actions of exhibiting lewd clothes and sex toys, as well as simulating sexual acts with the use of sexually explicit words in her videos pointed to being "patently offensive" under the law.

The actress-vlogger responded to the supposed "lies" peddled by the group, as per a statement released on her Facebook page on Friday, Sept. 29. Fowler pointed out that the music video of her song "MPL" only features sex toys, as opposed to KSMBPI's claim that it shows actual reproductive organs.

"Gaya ng kalayaan ninyong tawagin akong bastos, malaswa, at hindi magandang halimbawa tulad ng aking kanta, may kalayaan din akong ariin ang aking sarili," she said.

(While you have the freedom to call me salacious, obscene and a bad example because of my song, I also have the freedom to own myself.)

"Kasama dito ang pag-aari ko sa aking katawan, sa aking pagkababae, at higit sa lahat ang pag-aari ko sa nais kong gawin, sabihin, kantahin, o sayawin dahil hindi nito binabawasan o inaapakan ang karapatan ng ibang tao," she continued. "Hindi ninyo pag-aari ang mga ito."

(This includes owning my body and my femininity, especially what I want to do, say, sing and dance, as long as it does not harm other people. You have no right over all this.)

Fowler underscored that she did not force anyone into watching her contents, further noting that having sexual desire and engaging in sexual intercourse are "part of being human."

"Wala kayong puwang para sabihan at pagbawalan ako. Hindi ninyo lugar ang pagbawalan ang mga babaeng gaya ko—gaya ng pagbabawal ninyo sa aming kilos, pananamit, pati na rin sa pakikipag-usap," she stated. "Hindi kayo ang karapat-dapat na manguna sa pagpuna lalo na sa mga usaping sexual naming kababaihan dahil unang-una, hindi ito bawal at hindi kayo babae."

(You don't have the right to forbid me and tell me what to do. You're not in the position to forbid women like me—just like how you aim to rule over our actions, the way we dress and talk. You do not have the right to criticize matters regarding women's sexuality because first of all, such is not prohibited; also, you are not a woman.)

The "Batang Quiapo" actress also clarified that no one from the music video cast drank alcoholic drinks while filming, and that the liquors they consumed were actually juice. Fowler stressed as well that minors were not involved in doing the sexual scenes in the "MPL" video.

"Gusto kong sabihin sa inyo na matapang kong haharapin ang mga kasong inihain ninyo laban sa akin dahil kahit na ano pa ang itawag ninyo sa akin, taas noo ko itong haharapin at sasabihing ako'y tahimik lang sa umpisa, pero marunong akong lumaban kahit di ninyo ako pilitin," Fowler concluded her statement, making a reference to a line from "MPL."

(I want you to know that I will bravely face the case you filed against me because whatever names you call me, I can proudly say that I'm just quiet at first but I know how to fight even if you do not force me to.)

TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD TO HOLD “OPEN HOUSE JOB FAIR”

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.



The Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB)

will host an “Open House Job Fair” on October 18, 2023(Wednesday) from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre(CEC), TCDSB, 80 Sheppard Avenue East, Toronto, Ontario. The event is aimed at discussing career opportunities that are available for Filipinos, Indigenous, Black,

2SLGBTQ+, and racialized candidates seeking employment with the Catholic school board.

TCDSB is looking for talented and dedicated staff to join its team of teachers, educational assistants, maintenance workers, social workers, administrative and other professional staff. Specifically, the Catholic school board hopes to recruit Teachers, Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Workers, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Secretaries, Caretakers and Maintenance, Library Technicians, Social

Workers, Psychoeducational Consultants, Psychologists, and Speech and Language Pathologists.

As an inclusive Catholic learning community, the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) “serves approximately 84,000 students in nearly 200 Catholic schools” in the City of Toronto, with a workforce of 14,000 employees. It is “committed to inclusion and fostering a diverse workforce and especially welcomes applications from individuals who would contribute to the further diversification

of its staff. The TCDSB is “an exciting, creative and supportive workplace, with a strong focus on making a profound academic impact on its students. “

To learn more about TCDSB and the many career opportunities, interested individuals and professionals are encouraged to join in this information session.

For further information and to help answer any questions, Email: hr.recruitment@tcdsb.org. (Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)



British singer Jamie Miller in awe of ‘friend’ Moira Dela Torre

Jamie Miller has nothing but admiration for Moira Dela Torre and her talent, as the “Here’s Your Perfect” singer looked forward to working with the OPM singer again.

Miller gave a glimpse of their recent guesting at the Wish Bus where they performed their song collaboration “Maybe Next Time,” via the British singer’s Instagram page on Sept. 27.

Miller was greeted with loud cheers from his fans who had gathered around the bus to watch his and Dela Torre’s performance.

“Thank you so much for showing up for me and [Moira],” he said in the caption.

“Moira, I’m blown away by you and your voice and your heart,” he then addressed the OPM singer. “Until next time, friend.”

Dela Torre showed moments from their performance as well via her Instagram page and wrote, “It was so nice to finally meet you and sing ‘Maybe Next Time’ live with you, [Jamie].”

Dela Torre and Miller first announced their collaboration in July. This is not the first time Miller worked with a Filipino singer as he had already shared the stage with Morissette Amon during her US concert last year.

How Cherie Gil’s advice helped drive Jake Cuenca’s insecurities away

Even after 22 years in the biz, Jake Cuenca is not lulled into complacency. He has more amor for his craft. The Kapamilya actor is at his prime. Jake is living la vida Cuenca na may kwenta.

Here are quotes from Jake:

Richard Gutierrez and I are all pumped up for the finale of “Iron Heart” in a few weeks. We will display a different set of fighting skills. I am having separation anxiety from our series to the point that I still can’t seem to move on and accept another project.

Even if Chie Filomena is nine years younger than me, I am learning a lot from her about patience because of her journey in the industry. She has come a

long way and her time has come. She really knows what she wants. I want to clarify that we are still dating and not yet a couple.

Call me a mama’s boy, but at this point of my career, I want to get my mom involved in all that I do. If she does not approve of a project, then I’m not doing it.

I don’t keep in touch with my exes, but if they call me out of the blue and need my help, they can count on me for old times’ sake.

The best thing I did in my career was to march to the beat of my own drum. Why be molded into a certain image when you can do so much more?



The best advice I followed was from Ms Cherie Gil when she told me to go to drama school. After studying at Lee Strasberg Theater and Film Institute in New York, my insecurities melted away and my diskarte changed.

Eddie Garcia, Albert Martinez and Christopher de Leon are my heroes. Their common denominator is how they love being on the set. They don’t mind the clock while they are working. By their example, I have learned to love the process of being an actor all the more.

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Senate OKs bill revitalizing dying salt industry

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate has unanimously approved on final reading a bill, which outlines measures aimed at revitalizing the salt industry and boosting production by salt farmers.

In Senate Bill 2243, a Philippine Salt Industry Development Roadmap will be formulated. The roadmap will include programs, projects and interventions for the development and management, research, processing, utilization, modernization, and commercialization of Philippine salt.

A 16-member Philippine Salt Industry Development Council, headed by the Department of Agriculture secretary, will be also established.

Despite having a coastline 11 times larger than Vietnam, the country only produces 100,000 metric tons of salt compared to its Southeast Asian neighbor's 1.1 million MT, according to the Philippine Association of Salt Industry Networks.

"This implies the need to revitalize the dying salt industry. We need to meet the growing demand of Filipino households and the additional annual demand for 300,000 metric tons of salt as coconut fertilizer," said Sen. Cynthia Villar, chair of the agriculture committee and principal sponsor of the bill

If passed, the measure will assign the Department of Environment and Natural



Resources and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to identify and designate public lands, including portions of municipal waters, as salt production areas.

DENR will transfer public lands suitable for salt production under its administrative jurisdiction to BFAR.

The proposed measure will also lease public land for salt production for a 25-year period, renewable for another 25 years, for use as farms.

The House of Representatives approved its version of the measure in May.

SNAPSHOT

Almost all ocean plastic is coming from the developing world

Last year, a study from Germany's Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research concluded that up to 95 per cent of the world's ocean plastic was coming from 10 rivers: Eight in Asia and two in Africa. That same year, a report from the group Ocean Conservancy concluded that 60 per cent of the world's ocean plastic pollution could be traced to just five countries: China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

Pops Fernandez: Embracing change, chasing new dreams

Pops Fernandez is returning to the limelight. The singer-actress recently inked a management contract with Viva Artist Agency (VAA).

Asked as to what motivated her latest comeback, Pops emphasized the need for self-improvement and growth.

Note that Pops actually attempted to retire from the 'biz several times, but it keeps pulling her back in, with clamors for performances here and abroad.

After experiencing the thrill of performing, she had a realization: "This is really where I want to be."

Excitement rekindled, she told herself, "Sige, I want to work some more habang kaya ko pa, habang may energy pa ako... Why not?"

However, she emphasized the importance of taking breaks once in a while, especially when feeling pressured or going through a tough time.

"Minsan kasi it's the pressure that gets you, lalo na kapag may pinagdadaan ka, ma-pe-pressure ka ng industry. Siyempre tao lang tayo," she reasoned.

Pops is eager to face new challenges.

Currently, she's "learning" and "discovering," relating how the entertainment landscape has evolved significantly.

She points to aspiring artists of today having it easier.

"Mas madali ngayon sa mga bata to be noticed, for their songs to be heard via digital platforms. They're very, very lucky. Dati kasi kami pahirapan i-play ang kanta."

Pops also observed a shift towards singer-songwriters who actually produce and market their own songs.

"I-upload nila yan (sa social media), nagandahan ang kanilang followers, nagiging automatic million views," she said.

The 56-year-old can't help but reflect, "Dati bago ma-notice it's hard work. Lalo na if you want to make it internationally. Ngayon, parang mas madali dahil ang



daming ways to be noticed and to get there."

She warmly welcomes social media, recognizing its role in modern promotion.

"This is a totally different medium but I do welcome all this digital stuff, all this new social media stuff because iba na rin ang way of promotion ngayon. Dati kasi magpa-guest ka sa (TV and radio) and all that."

Pops remembers past recording process, where precision and hard work were crucial.

"Dati kasi hardwork talaga e. Pagsinabing recording, kapag mali e take it from the top. Talagang aaralin mo yung kanta. Minsan na-aral mo na pero wala namang feelings, so papaulit sayo."

Nevertheless, Pops underscores the significance of these experiences.

In any case, she's open to collaborating with a younger generation of musicians.

Pops believes it will contribute to her growth as an artist.

Regarding her acting career, Pops is open-minded. Teased if she is willing to something that involves a May-December storyline, she quipped, "Parang true to life."

Of course, Pops' past romances with younger men including Jomari Ylanna, is no secret.

She continued, "Of course. Why not? I think that will be something I never experienced, keme... Why not. Sure."

How about intimate scenes and such?

"Kailangan yung babagay naman and ma-accept pa rin ng tao na gagawin ko siguro. Magiging lolly (grandmother) na ako so dapat yung babagay."

'Di ko siya dini-deny': Joshua Garcia opens up over rumored romance with Emilienne Vigier

Actor Joshua Garcia broke his silence on his rumored relationship with French-Filipina athlete Emilienne Vigier.

In an interview with the media on the sidelines of the press conference for the movie "Fruitcake" yesterday held in Kao Manila at the Newport World Resorts in Pasay City, Joshua opened up about his relationship with the French-Filipina golfer.

"Para maklaro na lahat and wala nang maitanong ang lahat. Baka kasi sabihin nila, dini-deny ko 'yung babae, 'di ba?" he said.

"Hindi ko siya dini-deny. It's just that, ako and her decided not to share it to everyone. Kasi 'yung relationship na 'yan ay kami lang naman 'yung parte dun, e," he added.

Joshua said that he learned so much from his past relationships that he wanted his love life to be private.

"Galing na kasi ako sa iba't ibang klaseng relationship. Every time na sini-share ko siya sa lahat, parang... nagkakagulo, alam mo 'yun? Nagiging shaky 'yung relationship kasi," he said.

"Parang... this time, mas pinapahalagahan ko 'yung privacy ko para sa ganung aspect. Ganung klaseng ano... hindi lang dun, pati sa pamilya ko, 'di ba? Hangga't maaari kasi, sa panahon ngayon, mas okay kung private na lang tayo," he added.

Joshua and Emilienne were always seen together in different social media posts.

Produced by Cornerstone Studios and Creative Cinema, "Fruitcake" is directed by Joel Ferrer and written by Miko Livelo.

"Fruitcake" is a multi-character comedy-drama film that portrays the intertwining stories of Filipinos from all walks of life in modern-day Metro Manila. At the lowest and unluckiest point in their lives, their destinies converge on one fateful LRT train ride.

Apart from Joshua, the movie stars Enchong Dee, Ria Atayde, Heaven Peralejo, Jane Oineza, Dominic Ochoa, KD Estrada, Empoy Marquez, Queenay Mercado, Alex Diaz, Markus Paterson, Noel Comia Jr., Victor Anastacio, Kat Galang, Macoydubs, Red Ollero, Kaila Estrada and Karina Bautista.



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kaliit, sa kahit anong larangan - teatro, entablado, TV, film."

For Ruby, acting has been personally enriching. She maintains, "I give integrity to what I do."

Despite her achievements, she remains grounded. She's still open to participating in students' thesis projects if she relates to the story's narrative and purpose.

Thanks to director Christopher Novabos, Ruby became part of "Langitgit," a film where the lead role was tailored for her.

Ruby admired the artistic approach taken in "Langitgit" and expressed hope that it might be considered for international festivals. Ruby declared, "I'm so proud to be part of 'Langitgit,' it's something different."

Whenever Ruby hears negative assumptions about Vivamax projects, she is quick to defend them.

She emphasized that there is always a story behind them.

However, she confessed to being shocked during her first Vivamax project when she encountered explicit scenes.

She recalled thinking, "Oh my God, ito na pala yung trend ngayon? Talagang hubad?"

Ruby even spoke with young stars about them doing such scenes.

She noted, "Sure ka ba sa ginagawa mo? Enjoy ka?" and received confident responses.

She emphasized that each person follows their own path to success.

Ruby, a seasoned actress, doesn't judge any of the stars she works with.

She acknowledged that in her youth, she wouldn't have been comfortable with the roles some take on, but for them, it's a natural part of acting.

She admires their ability to perform without malice while delivering powerful performances.

For Ruby, that's true talent.

Ruby Ruiz: 'Isa-puso ang bawat role na ibibigay sa inyo'

There are no small roles.

This was emphasized by Ruby Ruiz at the press conference for the Vivamax movie "Langitgit."

This is something she hopes newcomers will learn to appreciate.

She advised, "Isa-puso ang bawat role na ibibigay sa inyo para yung performance niyo would come from the heart."

Ruby never trivialized the roles given her, maintaining, "Lagi kong pinahalagahan kahit gaano pa



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TORONTO - Purposefully committed to challenging and encouraging Filipino Canadian students in Ontario to achieve student success and excel in school performance, the Filipino Centre Toronto (FCT) is now accepting candidates for its annual competition for the "2023 FCT- RCJ Outstanding Students Awards."

This year's FCT Outstanding Students Awards event started in 2005, is an annual program of selecting and recognizing outstanding and exemplary elementary, high school, and post-secondary graduates from Public, Catholic, and other government-supported educational institutions in Ontario. To date, FCT has honoured 146 elementary, high school, and post-secondary outstanding Filipino-Canadian graduates in the province.

Through its Outstanding Students Awards Committee (OSA), the Centre will present awards to chosen outstanding student graduates who have completed their elementary or high school or post-secondary studies

(baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral). The selection criteria for top elementary and high school graduates include scholastic achievement/academic marks - 50%, community involvement-15%, extra-curricular activities - 15%, and interview performance - 20%.

All applicants, who have been screened and approved by the Outstanding Student Awards Committee, will be recognized and honoured appropriately in a ceremony. Monetary awards, trophies, plaques, and certificates will be presented to the winners of each category. The Awards Rites will take place tentatively on November 26, 2023 (Sunday) at 2:00 p.m. at the FCT Social Hall, Toronto.

The overall requirements for the 2018 FCT Outstanding Student Award Competition are as follows: A. General Requirements for All Categories: Any applicant or candidate for an FCT Award must be a 1) Natural-born Filipino or of Filipino descent (either parent is Filipino); 2) a Citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada; 3) Of good moral and exemplary character, i.e. has no pending charge involving sexual or child abuse or

criminal case.

B. Specific Requirements for Elementary and High School Graduates. To qualify:

1) The applicant should be currently registered in the elementary or secondary school in Ontario, under one of the following categories: The elementary school applicant should have completed the last year of elementary school and be going into high school (Grade 9); The high school applicant should be accepted and going into university or community college or apprenticeship program.

2) The student should have a minimum academic average of 85% (or equivalent) during the last two (2) school years and must be involved in extra-curricular and community activities. 3) The applicant must submit the following documents: For the elementary school graduate - Original copies of final report cards for the last two years. For the high school graduate - A current and original transcript bearing the school's official seal. Also, two (2) original letters of character reference (one from the school, excluding immediate family); two

(2) passport-size photos, and A completed FCT application form.

C. Qualification Requirements for Post-Secondary Honour Candidates:

1) For Undergraduate or Baccalaureate Degree candidates: Must have achieved Academic Honours, with Notation printed in the candidate's degree diploma, such as any of the following: "Summa Cum Laude" or "Magna Cum Laude" or "Cum Laude" or "With Highest Distinction" (GPA 3.8 or higher) or "With Distinction" (3.5 to 3.79); or university/ college equivalent academic honours distinctive awards.

2) For Graduate Masteral or Doctoral Degree candidates: Must have achieved Graduate Average Grade of Letter Grades of A+, A, A- only; or Numerical Marks of 90-100%, 85-89%, 80 -84% only; or High Pass-Clear Excellence or acceptable equivalent marking scale.

3) Documents (Photocopies only) to be submitted: a) Undergraduate program: Bachelor's Diploma with Academic Honours Notation; b) Graduate program: Transcript of Academic Record and Thesis or Disserta-

tion Paper, and 4) Passport-size Photo; 5) Completed FCT Application Form. Academic awards received must not be more than 5 years old, from the date of application.

The members of the FCT Outstanding Students Awards Committee (OSA) include notable Filipino-Canadian professionals and educators. OSA is composed of Tony A. San Juan, as Chairman and the members are Jodelyn Huang, Steve Pagao, Nitz Redjik, Mary Ann San Juan, Fermer Santos, and Garry Tanuan.

Application forms for the FCT's Outstanding Students Awards are now available via Filipinocentreinfo@gmail.com, The deadline for submission of completed forms and documents is November 3, 2023(Friday). Personal interviews for elementary and secondary candidates will begin on November 11, 2018(Saturday). Completed forms and requirements are to be submitted by hand or mailed to: The Filipino Centre Toronto, RCJ OSA Committee, c/o Tony A. San Juan, Chairman, 4395 Sheppard Ave. East, Toronto, ON M1S 1T9 or call: 416-335-0485. (TSJ).

Belle Mariano, Donny Pangilinan now in 'courting stage'

Belle Mariano candidly admitted that she and her perennial onscreen partner Donny Pangilinan are now in the "courting stage" of their relationship, as she gushed about the young actor's gentlemanly traits.

Speaking to Vice Ganda for his vlog which was uploaded on the latter's YouTube channel on Friday, Mariano appeared to have been put on the spot when asked by the actor-comedian if she has ever said "I love you" to Pangilinan, and vice versa.

"Teh, grabe naman. [Bakit], 'I love you' agad? Grabe naman. Wait, pinagpapawisan ako," she said while

laughing. "Donny [Pangilinan], ikaw ang sumagot niyan." (Sister, that's too much! Why "I love you" right away? That's too much. Wait, I'm sweating... Donny Pangilinan, can you answer the question?)

Vice Ganda then prodded her: "So nagliligawan kayo ni Donny?" (So you and Donny are in the courting stage?)

The actress-singer appeared to laugh nervously before admitting that Pangilinan is currently courting her, but that she could not say how long their courtship has been



going on. "Hindi ko alam [gaano katagal ang aking ligandin], masabi. Feeling ko ongoing pa rin [yung ligawan namin ni Donny]," she said finally. (I don't know how long it's been, but I feel like our courting stage is still ongoing.)

Mariano admitted that Pangilinan makes her feel giddy with excitement with his gentlemanly ways. "Binibigyan niya ako ng pagka-

in. Gentleman siya, super selfless, and considerate. Parang never pa niya ako hindi pinagbuksan ng pinto (He always gives me food. He's a gentleman, super selfless, and considerate. He always makes sure to open the door for me)," she said, counting off her "favorite qualities" of her beau.

During the vlog, Mariano said she is not closing her doors to being paired with other actors in the future, while sharing that she and Pangilinan hope to emerge as filmmakers someday.

"We still want to work with each other [as a loveteam] but of course, I would like to explore more. I would like to be a director someday, and so does he. Actually, we are both open to the idea [of having other onscreen

partners in the future]," she said. "Nagkaroon kami ng conversation na we're going to be there to support one another. Ayaw namin maging hindrance sa growth ng isa't isa whether individual or together 'yung project namin," she continued. (We used to have a conversation in the past that we will be there to support one another. We don't want to hinder each other's growth whether a project is for just one of us, or if we're together.)

Mariano and Pangilinan are set to star in their first teleserye "Can't Buy Me Love," which will premiere sometime in the year.

The singer-actress will portray the role of the rich Filipino-Chinese Caroline, while the actor will star as the hardworking Bingo.

They won't be little forever Dingdong on making time for kids

Dingdong Dantes didn't expect 2023 to be this busy—three television shows, a primetime soap and a coming entry to the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF). His hectic work schedule eventually caught up with him.

"Earlier this year, when I learned that my path for this year would be like this, in a way I was a little shocked ... The year is ending in just three months, and I thought I would make it through all my projects without getting sick. But I did a few weeks ago, which caused some delays. It is what it is," Dingdong said at a recent visit to the set of the game show "Family Feud."

Aside from "Family Feud," whose new season begins airing on Oct. 2 on GMA 7, Dingdong also hosts the infotainment program "Amazing Earth" and the reality singing competi-



tion "The Voice Generations." His drama series, "Royal Blood," ended last Sept. 22. Meanwhile, shooting has already started for his MMFF film "Rewind," which he topbills with his wife, Marian Rivera.

"Fortunately, everything's OK. I'm now well-rested and reenergized for the rest of the year," the Kapuso star said. "We're taking it a day at a time."

Truth be told, there were times, Dingdong said, when he wished he could spend more time with his children, Zia, 7, and Sixto IV, 4. That's why he makes sure that his Sundays, as much as possible, are devoted to his family.

"Minsan, nagkukulang

talaga sa oras... So if it's a Sunday, or if there are things I can put off, or not do at all, I give my time to them. Sometimes, even if I get home late from a shoot, I still get up early the next morning so I can take the kids to school," he said.

"For me, this stage in their lives is so important—they won't be this young forever. Soon, they will grow up and develop their own interests. So, tired or not, I want to be with them as much as I can," the 43-year-old actor added.

This is one reason Dingdong loves hosting "Family Feud." Not only does it demand a considerably smaller chunk of his schedule, it can also easily accommodate his children if they please.

Robi Domingo hints at December wedding with Maqui Pineda

Kapamilya host Robi Domingo revealed

that he's not preparing so much for Christmas to prepare for a grander event in his life.

Philstar.com asked Robi about his Christmas preparation during the red carpet of ABS-CBN Ball 2023.

"I'll give you a hint. I'm not preparing so much for Christmas because I have to prepare for something grander and bigger," Robi said.

Robi and fiancée Maqui Pineda are set to tie the knot soon.

Robi, who celebrated his 34th year birthday last September 27, told Philstar.com that he wishes her Maqui to get better.

"My birthday wish is for my fiancée to get better so that we can fulfill our plans together," he said.



Maqui revealed that she has autoimmune disease called Dermatomyositis.

In her Instagram account, Maqui said the supposed wedding preparation became a nightmare.

"What was supposed to be an exciting year of wedding planning, preparing for a new home, and working on my career, life had other plans for me... I got sick," she said.

"I have a rare autoimmune disease called Dermatomyositis that causes muscle weakness, inflammation, and a skin rash," she added.

Robi then assured Maqui that he will be with her all the way.

"Really proud of your progress and your courage. You got this. Everyone is here for you and with you. Gotchu Maiqs," he said.

DSWD’s food stamp program set for expansion

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. expressed his support for expanding the Food Stamp Program (FSP) initiated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) following a successful launch on Siargao Island, Surigao del Norte.

Speaking at a rice distribution event in Surigao del Norte, Marcos said that the government is planning to extend the program next month.

The FSP, a DSWD flagship program, aims to reduce hunger by improving ac-

cess to nutritious food for disadvantaged households. It provides cash-based assistance through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.

Marcos personally led the FSP launch at Teatro Nan Dapa in Dapa, Siargao Island, where he distributed EBT cards, each with P3,000 in food credits, to 50 beneficiaries. “I have to say that it’s proceeding smoothly and we will be upscaling it within the next month or so. We are aiming at the next face of this rollout, we

are already looking to 3,000 families to be beneficiaries,” Marcos said. Although the FSP is currently in its pilot stage, Marcos said that it is showing promising results and is firmly aligned with its long-term goal, which is to make nutritious food accessible to ordinary citizens, particularly in remote areas.

During the event, the president thanked international sponsors, including the United Nations’ World Food Programme, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and

France’s government, for their support. A grant of US\$3 million was secured from the French Development Agency, ADB, and Japan International Cooperation Agency, with plans to assist 300,000 households next year.

Initially, the FSP was launched for 3,000 families in five areas: Tondo, Manila; Dapa, Siargao; San Mariano, Isabela; Garchitorena, Camarines Sur; and Parang, Maguindanao. It was first conducted on July 18 in Tondo, Manila.

WHY Gabby feels ‘now is the time’ to REUNITE with Sharon

“Concepcion nung araw ito eh.” That was how Gabby Concepcion teasingly introduced ex Sharon Cuneta at their very brief encounter during “back-to-back” solo presscons ahead of their first concert together, Dear Heart 2023, on Oct. 27 at the SM MOA Arena.

Gabby, nevertheless, hinted that anything can happen.

The former reel and real-life partners will officially reunite on the concert night itself.

Prior to that, they will not be meeting each other or even rehearsing their duets together.

“It’s part of the plan... It’s a gimmick na hindi kami magkikita. In fact, we have no rehearsals together. Sa show na kami magkikita,” Gabby said.

“We have rehearsals but not the two of us. There’s a stand-in (during rehearsals)... With enough practice on our own, hopefully, we can deliver something of value. It’s a challenge because we’ve not done anything like this.”

“Mahirap laging magkasama at nagkikita kasi baka magka-develop,” he would joke later on during the presscon.

One thing is for sure, their long-delayed and highly-anticipated reunion project is finally pushing through.

Asked what really made the actor say yes to the concert, Gabby said, “It’s been a long time actually. Dapat nuon pa ito. In fact, may movie sana kami gagawin nuon and I think everything came down to timing. I guess, it wasn’t time then. So, now is the time. I have very few words but my excitement ko andun lahat.”

He also said, “Of course, maganda naman yung feeling kaya natuloy ito dahil kung nanduduan pa rin yung hanging na ano, ‘di matutuloy ito. Kaya ang sarap ng feeling ng ‘wag muna kayo magkita para may suspense even for us.”

Gabby dedicated this onstage reunion to the ShaGab fans who have stayed loyal to their



tandem through the years.

“I’ve said this before to Sharon and to our producers, I’m excited to do this show more for the fans. Sila naman talaga ang nag-umpisa sa amin. Kahit wala akong kitain dito...

“To be honest, I’m really

more excited in that sense. Sabi ng father ko, ‘pag naging doctor ka, sa kapatid ko, hindi para sayo yan, yung services mo para sa tao. Yung nagpasok sa akin, other than Mother Lily (Monteverde of Regal Entertainment), of course, yung mga fans natin na nilagay tayo diyan, sa kanila ako nagpapasalamat.

The last time they saw each other in person was at the backstage of a Gabay Guro event in 2019.

Gabby, nevertheless, clarified that he and Sharon are OK. “Pero wala kaming issues. May kanya-kanya kaming buhay. Wala kaming issues. Kaming dalawa wala. Yan ang maganda.

“Actually, maganda nga. If this was done 10 years ago, things would be different. But things are different now. We’re OK. Can’t wait.”

In an earlier media interview, KC had said she was feeling mixed emotions over the concert.

“I am their only child so I don’t think nararamdaman ng iba ‘yung nararamdaman ko about this reunion because it is mixed emotions. But of course, nananaig ‘yung happiness ko,” she said.

“So, hopefully, guys, pag-pray nating lahat na ito na yung start ng friendship nila.”

Besides Dear Heart 2023, Sharon and Gabby will have a special VIP night at Okada Manila’s Grand Ballroom on Oct. 30 and In Life’s Dear Heart in Cebu on Nov. 17 at the NuStar Convention Center. Details are available on Dear Heart’s official social media pages.

How Maricel Soriano treats intimidated coactors in ‘Pira-Pirasong Paraiso’

While Maricel Soriano said she would be open to a reunion project with her 1980s on-screen partner William Martinez, the actress said she would also like to work with young talents like Daniel Padilla, Joshua Garcia and Enchong Dee.

“I’m willing to sit down and discuss that,” said Maricel when asked if she would be up to working with William, since her contemporary, Sharon Cuneta, will soon be seen in a reunion concert with Gabby Concepcion.

However, Maricel said she would also wish to have the chance to collaborate with Enchong and Daniel, whose names she mentioned after saying, “I want to pick good-looking actors,” and Joshua, whom she described as “a really good one.”

As part of the cast of the afternoon drama series “Pira-pirasong Paraiso,” Maricel is currently working with four young actresses, namely Charlie Dizon, Alexa Ilacad, Loisa Andalio and Elise Joson. She plays Amanda, the guilt-stricken grandmother of the long-lost Paraiso sisters.

“I’m enjoying my time with them because I’ve never had a daughter,” said Maricel, who in real life is mom to sons Marron and Sebastien. “Whenever I see them, I interview them. I make them tell me their interests and I remind them that as actresses, they have to make sure they look beautiful and fresh. I talk to them as if they’re my own baby girls.”

Nuggets of advice

Maricel also makes sure to share nuggets of advice with her wards. “I keep telling them, don’t feel intimidated by me or by any actor you work with,” she said.

“I’ve also given them a lot of girly advice, like what lip color and underwear to use in specific circumstances. I just can’t share them with you,” she told reporters, laughing.

Charlie, who plays Diana in the series, said she felt so overwhelmed prior to doing her first scene with Maricel that she had to go to the bathroom to cry herself out. “I couldn’t release the right emotion. Inay Maricel was so giving.”

Alexa said all the actors who were supposed to have scenes with Maricel felt nervous. “I even had clammy hands.

Every taping day, I would ask, ‘Will I have scenes with Inay tomorrow?’ This was because I knew I had to mentally prepare for them. I knew I had to have enough sleep and rest. Later, I noticed that whenever we would have scenes together, she would keep the atmosphere very light. She would also say, ‘We’re all equal here,’” said Alexa, who plays Belle in the program.



Soriano (center) with Elise Joson (left), Loisa Andalio, Charlie Dizon and Alexa Ilacad

‘Powerful aura’

“I also discovered that we’re both very fond of aromatherapy. She also showed me her diamond collection. I told her, ‘Inay, if you lose them, I can’t be the suspect.’ I feel so lucky to have been given the chance to work with her,” Alexa said.

Prior to working on their scenes together, Elise said she did her research on Maricel. When the day to work with her finally came, I went to our room and, immediately, I felt this aura from her that made me

feel dumbfounded. It was so powerful,” she said.

“When we got to talk some more, I realized that she’s actually very caring and motherly. I want to be like her someday—she has this very powerful aura, but when you get to know her, you’ll discover that she’s really sweet,” stressed Elise, who plays Hillary.

Loisa recalled feeling confused the first time she had to rehearse with Maricel. “She kept cracking jokes, so I didn’t know whether or not I should banter with her because I didn’t want to embarrass myself. I pictured her asking me, ‘Close ba tayo?’ That’s also what’s amazing about her. She could be in character at a snap of a finger,” said Loisa, who plays Baby.

When asked if there was ever a time that she felt intimidated by a coworker, Maricel said: “I never feel intimidated. That’s my problem. I guess it’s because I’m a happy person. I know who I am and I know I’m for God.”

Maricel said she considered the late comedian Dolphy, whom she worked with in the sitcom “John en Marsha,” as one of her mentors. “Of course, he shared so much advice with me, but the best one was to always remain humble, to always keep my feet on the ground. He said that I have to understand that, sometimes, people are just too shy to approach me, so I should be humble enough to make the first move,” Maricel said.

Marco Gumabao reacts to American singer David DiMuzio’s post about Cristine Reyes

Napa-react nang wala sa oras ang hunk actor na si Marco Gumabao nang makita ang picture ng kanyang kasintahan na si Cristine Reyes at American singer-songwriter na si David DiMuzio.

Noong September 22, 2023, in-upload sa Facebook ni David ang isang throw-back picture, sabay tanong sa caption kung sino ang nakakakilala sa babaeng katabi niya. Saad ni David (published as is), “Does anyone know this girl’s name?”

“I remember she was really nice when we met years ago, and she’s an actress, but I can’t remember her name [laugh emoji].”

Sa isa pa niyang hiwalay na post, maki-kita muli ang litrato nila ng babae na nakangiti sa kanya.

Dinagdagan ito ni David ng makahu-

lugang caption na, “Naaalala mo pa ba? [laughing in tears emoji].”

Sa comments section ng kanyang post, tinukoy ng kanyang nga tagahanga na si Cristine ang kasama niya sa litrato.

Agad na nag-viral ang post, at karamihan sa netizens ay pabirong tinag ang kasalukuyang nobyo ni Cristine na si Marco.

Nakarating naman sa aktor kaya nag-reply ito sa unang post ni David ng emoji na animo’y nag-iisip.

NETIZENS REACT

Habang isinusulat ang artikulong ito ay mayroon ng 1.3K laughing reactions ang comment na iniwan ni Marco.

Marami ring netizens ang binalaan ang aktor na habang maaga pa ay bakuran na

niya si Cristine para hindi na maagaw sa kanya.

Komento ng isang netizen, “Marco, pakasalan mo na habang hindi pa inaagaw.”

Saad pa ng isa, “Naku Marco, kabahan ka na.”

Mayroon pang netizens na nagbigay ng suhestiyon kay Marco na mag-apply na raw sa Anti-Selos Class ng Kapuso actor na si Jak Roberto.

Dagdag pa ng isa, “Nag overthink tuloy si Marco kung ano yung alala-ala na sinasabi ni David hahaha.”

MARCO-CRISTINE RELATIONSHIP

Backtrack sa petsang March 1, 2023, kung saan unang nag-viral ang mga litrato nina Cristine at Marco na habang nagwu-workout sa Siargao.



Hindi nagtagal, mismong si Marco na ang nagkumpirma noong March 25 na nagde-date sila ni Cristine.

April 24, nang tuluyang isapubliko ng couple ang kanilang relasyon, at ibinahagi pa ni Marco sa Instagram ang sweet photos nila ni Cristine.

Dito makikitang hinahalikan ni Marco si Cristine sa pisngi habang sila’y nasa beach, kalakip ang maikling caption na: “You are my home and my adventure all at once [heart, face blowing a kiss emojis].”

SINÉ INSTITUTE CREATES A BRIDGE NOT TOO FAR

TORONTO - Officially launched amidst a flurry of TIFF activities and well-attended by a group of enthused stakeholders in the film community and celebrities, SINÉ INSTITUTE was born aiming to nurture and promote Filipino talents between Canada and the Philippines creating the bridge accessible and not too far.

Led by Toronto Films School educator Michaelangelo Masangkay, Siné Institute is a non-profit organization that's dedicated to creating a vibrant community for new and emerging artists to collaborate with established and influential leaders in the creative industry. Its vision is to promote Filipino talents between and among Canada and the Philippines in producing meaningful and impactful work together. Siné is focused on magnifying collaborative efforts that will dive deeper into an inter generational community to bring out the best - The Philippines after all is universally recognized as The Pearl of the Orient seas.

The Siné launch also celebrated the participating Filipino films at TIFF featuring the much-talked about Your Mother's Son directed by multi-awarded director Jun Lana and produced by a widely familiar name in international film festivals, Ferdy Lapuz. The other two films are:



Sine Institute's President Michael Masangkay



Sun Bravo and director JUN Lana of ANAK KA NG INA MO

Nowhere Near by acclaimed experimental filmmaker Miko Revereza and Winnipeg filmmaker and artist Isiah Medina's He Thought He Died.

Included in the Short Cuts programme are: Sonny Calvento's Primetime Mother; Motherland, directed by Jasmin Mozaffari and Aftercare by Anubha Momin.

They are part of 42 narratives from 23 countries.

The launch of the SINÉ Institute represents a significant milestone in the promotion of Filipino talents. As the institute begins its journey in the creative industry, it is set to leave a lasting mark on the world of art and film.

For countless Filipinos who dream of one day making a film, this is the right time to get started and shine in the industry - there has never been more opportunity to make it a

full reality. Reach out, it's going to happen. SINÉ is behind you. Let the show begin.

BK JIMENEZ

Paul Salas reacts to Andrea Brillantes saying he was her childhood crush

Natatawa lang si Paul Salas, 25, nang tanungin kung alam niya na siya ang "first ever crush" ni Andrea Brillantes, 20.

Four years old si Andrea nang mag-ka-crush siya kay Paul, ayon mismo kay Andrea sa YouTube vlog ni Ivana Alawi.

"Nakarating na 'yon sa akin," natawang sabi ni Paul sa panayam.

Matagal na raw kakilala ni Paul si Andrea, na kilala rin sa palayaw na Blythe.



Lahad ni Paul: "At saka alam ko, before naman, nakakasama ko si Blythe, e, sa mga raket.

"Tapos, nagkaroon din kami ng isang movie shoot, Every day I Love You, yung kila Enrique Gil at

Liza Soberano, nagkasama kami ro'n."

Noon pa lang ay alam daw ni Paul na childhood crush siya ni Andrea.

"And open naman talaga siya about it. And si Mommy at saka yung mom niya, actually, magkakilala.

"So, parang matagal ko na rin alam na may gano'ng saying na noong bata siya [crush niya ako]," dagdag ni Paul.

Tinanong namin si Paul kung ano ang reaksiyon niya na noong bata lang siya nagustuhan ni Andrea, pero ngayon, hindi na.

"Okay lang 'yon," natatawang sagot pa rin niya.

"Actually, biruan lang 'yon. Kung single ako, baka puwedeng humirit-hirit ako, pero hindi. May inaalagaan din akong relationship."

Girlfriend ni Paul ang kapwa Kapuso star na si Mikee Quintos.

Ano ang reaksiyon ni Mikee sa rebelasyon ni Andrea sa vlog nito?

"Actually, alam niya 'yon. Kasi, parang may lumabas na rin na article dati.

"At saka, parang sa mga interview ni Blythe, nasasabi niya 'yon. Gano'n ka-open yung bata.

"Open din siya sa past life niya. Sa mga nangyayari sa buhay niya. Gano'n siya, e, kaya maraming nag-a-idol sa kanya.

"So, may idea rin si Mikee ro'n, so parang wala lang. Parang natatawa-tawa lang din siya. Wala naman siyang reaction or anything."



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Why do we Filipinos celebrate Christmas for four months?

CHRISTMAS from page 1

“Some may think it’s silly, but we do it anyway. It’s unique and heartwarming, and it ultimately brings us joy.”

The mainly Catholic country is known as the only one that celebrates Christmas for an extended period.

Mariah Carey, the singer behind the holiday hit All I Want for Christmas is You, acknowledged it in a recent post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

“I’ll allow it for my Filipino lambs, though,” she wrote in response to news that her Christmas song received 316,000 streams on Spotify last Friday.

Families typically start by putting up Christmas lights, and gradually build up the decorations closer to December 25.

People selling handmade parols or ornamental lanterns swell in numbers on the streets, and carolers start going door to door as early as November.

There have been many suggestions as to why this is the case. Filipinos’ penchant for Christmas is rooted in Catholicism and the many religious traditions the country practises during the season.

Christmas has become a crucial occasion for Filipinos who

work overseas, which the government said number about 1.8 million in a 2021 census.

Many of these migrant work-



ers, including a significant portion from the UAE, would use their annual leave over Christmas to reunite with their families.

This grand homecoming could offer an explanation for the months-long anticipation of the holiday, said Filipino sociologist Clifford Sorita in a 2018 report by NPR.

He said the “ber” months provide a “psychological time clock” for Filipinos, who are expecting a busy Christmas calendar with family and friends.

Sprott SAYS the extended festivities “allow us to fully immerse in the spirit of Christmas, which is all about being grateful, being kind, getting together with friends and family and end-

ing the year on a positive note”.

Belle Briones, also a Dubai resident, says: “Good things happen during Christmas, so if we can have it for longer, why not?”

Briones says the community aspect of the celebration is most notable. The Christmas season creates a “warm and cheerful atmosphere at home, but also within neighbourhoods”.

For some Filipinos abroad, the “ber” months are a poignant reminder of the distance they have to travel to provide a good life for their families at home.

Those who cannot travel over the holidays make it up by increasing their remittances.

According to data from Hubpay, a money transfer application, remittances to the Philippines increase to about 40 per cent during the fourth quarter and peak in December.

Sprott says she grew up “loving

For some Filipinos abroad, the “ber” months are a poignant reminder of the distance they have to travel to provide a good life for their families at home.

the feeling” of the months-long countdown to Christmas, and being able to open gifts only after the clock hits midnight on December 25.

“I want to continue this practice even as I grow older,” she says, adding that it comforts her knowing she is still part of a family tradition despite being thousands of kilometres away.

Sandbanks Pinoy Fiesta event helps raise \$5,000 to PECMH Foundation

Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites look to hosting a bigger Pinoy Fiesta 2024

It was a party where everyone was welcome to join!

Filipino culture was celebrated under sunny skies at the Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites in Cherry Valley on July 1 as part of their annual Pinoy Fiesta. The event marked the end of Filipino Heritage Month, recognized during the month of June. As part of the event, Juanita Abalos-Rejdi, owner of Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites sold t-shirts, mangoes, and other items and donated over \$5,000 to the Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Foundation’s (PECMHF) Back the Build campaign for the new hospital in Prince Edward County.

“Because of community events like the Pinoy Fiesta, the foundation can invest in lifesaving medical equipment that will be used in our new hospital,” said Barbara McConnell, chairperson of the PECMH Foundation. “Our County’s generosity is remarkable, and we are grateful to Juanita and her community of supporters at Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites who are helping us realize our vision of building a new County hospital through their fundraising efforts.”

Filipino Fiestas are events or festivals

where friends and family come together to share the culture of the Philippines. They are rooted in tradition and celebrate patron saints, ethnicity, and important milestones in Philippine history. Attendees can expect to enjoy a day full of entertainment, food, and camaraderie.

“On behalf of Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites, thank you! Thank you to the volunteers, performers, and everyone who came out to enjoy the fiesta,” said Abalos-Rejdi. “We are fortunate to be able to celebrate Philippine Independence and Filipino-Canadian culture while raising funds to ensure patients who visit the new hospital receive the best care that technology, and compassion have to offer in Prince Edward County.”

The team at Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites look forward to hosting a bigger Pinoy Fiesta event next summer. You can visit their website at <https://sandbankscottagesandcampsites.com/>.

The Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Foundation is a charitable organization dedicated to raising funds to advance health care for the people of Prince Edward County and patients of the hospital. (PHOTO AT RIGHT)

‘E.A.T.’ issues apology over Joey de Leon’s ‘lubid’ remark

The production team of “E.A.T.” has issued an apology for the “lubid” comment of host Joey de Leon.

In a letter dated Sept. 25, 2023 addressed to the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) chairperson Diorella “Lala” Sotto that circulated on social media, the production expressed regret over the incident.

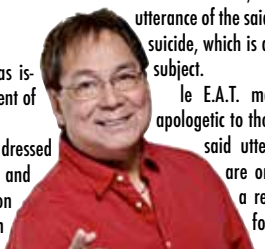
“During the said incident, Mr. Joey de Leon suggested ‘lubid’ (rope) as an answer to a question regarding things that may be worn around the neck. He conveyed this verbally in a very brief manner

without further actions, elaborations or demonstrations. However, some viewers interpreted the utterance of the said object to be an insinuation of suicide, which is a very sensitive and triggering subject.

The E.A.T. management is regretful and apologetic to those who were offended by the said utterance. Rest assured that we are one with MTRCB in advocating a responsible viewing experience for the public.”

The letter was signed by Jeny P. Ferre, “E.A.T.’s” head of creatives and production operations.

Note that the MTRCB is already reviewing the incident following complaints from viewers. Joey is yet to comment on the issue.



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Lorna Tolentino bares Rudy Fernandez’ ‘promise’ to marry her when she was just 7

Lorna Tolentino disclosed that her husband, the late action star Rudy Fernandez, had made a promise to himself when she was just seven years old to someday marry her – a promise that he eventually fulfilled.

In an interview with journalist Korina Sanchez, which was uploaded on Net25’s YouTube channel on Sunday, Sept. 24, Tolentino recounted her romance with Fernandez, whom she met when she was still a little girl.

“Ilang taon ka noong may Rudy Fernandez na (How old were you when Rudy Fernandez came to your life)?” Sanchez asked Tolentino.

“Seven years old ako noong nakita niya ako. Tapos noong 14 years old ako, naging best friend niya ‘yung kapatid ng mama ko... pumupunta siya sa bahay tapos nakikita na niya ako. Noong adult na ‘yung mga roles namin, medyo naging close na kami,” Tolentino aid.

The seasoned actress then shared what Fernandez told her as his promise to himself even when she was still young then, that he would marry her when she finally grows up. Tolentino is 10 years younger than her husband, which means that the late action star was 17 when he saw her for the first time.

“Actually ang sinabi niya sa akin, tinupad daw niya ‘yung pangako niya noong pinakas-



alan niya nga ako noong makita niya ako noong seven years old ako. Palakihin daw nang mabuti ‘yung batang ‘yan at pakakasalan ko siya,” she said.

During the interview,

Tolentino said she didn’t have any experiences when it comes to relationships except with Fernandez.

“Wala akong experience kundi si Daboy lang,” she said, referring to her husband using his showbiz moniker. “Mas okay para sa’kin [kasi parehas kami ng industriya]. Maraming tinuro sa’kin si Daboy na dala-dala ko hanggang ngayon.”

(I don’t have any experiences except Daboy. It’s better for me since we’re in the same industry. He taught me a lot of things that I still carry up to this day.)

Tolentino and Fernandez tied the knot in a civil ceremony in 1983 before exchanging their vows in a lavish affair in 1992. They have two sons named Renz and Raphael. The late actor is also the father of the actor Mark Anthony Fernandez with Alma Moreno.

Fernandez died in June 2008 after battling peri-ampullary cancer.



Kim Chiu hopeful ‘It’s Showtime’ will prevail after suspension appeal was denied by MTRCB

“It’s Showtime” host and actress Kim Chiu remained hopeful that the noontime show will triumph in the end, after the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) denied



1. Pictured in front of PECMH from left: Barbara McConnell, PECMHF board chairperson; Juanita Abalos-Rejdi, owner of Sandbanks Cottages and Campsites and Briar Boyce, senior development officer with the PECMH Foundation; 2. Kuya Wally celebrates his 80th birthday at The Filipino Centre Toronto with the seniors painting group.

the motion of reconsideration filed by ABS-CBN and GMA to appeal its 12-day suspension. Chiu briefly addressed the regulatory board’s ruling during a brand launch on Thursday, Sept. 28, when asked to give her two-cents on the current state of the Kapamilya noontime show. “Lahat naman ng problema, nakakaya namin — lalo na ang ‘It’s Showtime.’ Thirteen years na siyang noontime show at wala namang problema ang hindi nakakayanan



dahil na-test of time [kami]. Lahat naman tayo, na-test tayo ng time at may natutunan tayo,” she said. (We’ve prevailed over all of our problems, especially “It’s Showtime.” The noontime show has been around for 13 years, and no problem would remain that way, especially as we’ve

been tested by time. All of us are tested by time and we’ve learned from it.) The actress then thanked “It’s Showtime’s” fans for their support throughout its whole ordeal with the MTRCB. “We’re just very grateful na ang daming sumusuporta sa ‘It’s Showtime’ at ‘yun po ang mahalaga (We’re just very grateful that many people support ‘It’s Showtime’ as that’s what’s most important),” she said. Hours after the government agency denied the noontime show’s appeal, ABS-CBN confirmed that it’s “currently exploring all [their] remedies and options” as the MTRCB’s “imposed suspension is not yet final and executory.”

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Bella Poarch makes it to Forbes' list of top creators in 2023

And she is the only Filipino in the lineup

The Filipino-American social media star known for her engaging TikTok content has achieved yet another milestone in her rise to stardom.

Forbes has recognized Bella Poarch, the only Filipino on the list, as one of the "Top Creators of 2023," highlighting her earnings of \$3.3 million, which is approximately P189 million. The 28-year-old content

creator and singer secured the 34th spot on the lineup. According to Forbes, this year's 50 honorees on the second annual creator list collectively garnered 2.6 billion followers and an estimated \$700 million in earnings, marking a significant increase of over 20 percent from last year's \$570 million. With over 90 million TikTok follow-

ers, the Fil-Am personality skyrocketed to fame through cute cosplay content, lip-syncing videos, and her pop song "Build a B*tch," which reached no. 58 on Billboard's pop chart in May 2021. On her Forbes profile, it said that Poarch is also the only person on the list to have served in the military. "The former Navy helicopter mechanic has continued to be a true crossover star," the profile states. The list was made by looking into their estimated

earnings, follower counts, engagement rates, and entrepreneurial endeavors. Proving her influence and reach, "she's done deals with luxury fashion house Moncler and video game 'Call of Duty,' helping to make her one of the highest-paid TikTokers in 2021." At the top of the list with 312 million followers is Jimmy Donaldson, widely recognized as MrBeast, with a staggering total income of \$82 million or over P4 billion.



Oshawa singer, 16, wins Canadian National Exhibition Rising Star Talent competition

Oshawa's Thea Asedillo shone among the brightest lights at this year's Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto. The 16-year-old singer came first in the CNE's annual Rising Star Talent competition, which has been held every summer for the past three decades at the Ex. Thea was crowned as the grand champion this past weekend on the CNE's International Stage inside the Enercare Centre.



She was cheered on by a full crowd as she was named tops among more than 150 contestants who battled through 18 days of the fair. Contestants were judged on natural ability, audience appeal, stage presence and quality of their performance in the final analysis to determine a champion and two runners-up. As first-place finisher in the youth category, Thea earned a \$2,500 cash prize and bragging rights. Past notable participants in the CNE Rising Star competition include Juno Award-nominated jazz singer Matt Dusk, and top choreographer and dancer Blake McGrath of "So You Think You Can Dance" fame.D'



Rosary Escano, Courie Coutts, Consul-General Angelica Escalona, MsKim V, and entertainment journalist BK Jimenez meet at the launch of Sine Institute.

Alessandra De Rossi on reuniting, being good friends with JM de Guzman

Alessandra De Rossi said reuniting with JM de Guzman was a delight four years after their first film together, "Lucid," calling the actor a "beautiful presence" onscreen and behind-the-scenes. De Rossi and de Guzman once again joined forces for the movie "What If," which revolves around newlyweds Billie and Jecs who get trapped in a storm on their island honeymoon. This led to the couple unearthing past issues they initially thought were buried – ultimately putting a strain on their relationship.

"Yung 'Lucid,' four days lang kami together. Pero nagustuhan ko siyang ka-trabaho. Maganda presence niya. Walang arte, masayang ka-chika (In 'Lucid,' we were together for

only four days. But I enjoyed working with him. He had a beautiful presence. He wasn't hard to work with, he's fun to talk to)," De Rossi said of De Guzman during an exclusive Netflix roundtable with select entertainment media. Their pleasant working relationship made De Rossi eager to join forces with the actor again as a result. The former, however, joked that there were moments during filming which made her want to "give him a hug." "Marami kaming na-discover [tulad nang] hindi siya nakakabitaw agad, he needs a hug. Pero ang maganda kay JM, kahit anong ibato mo, kaya niyang saluhin. Hindi siya ibang actors na nagulat sa ginawa mo, hindi na nila alam anong gagawin nila. Siya, ang galing niya. Nakikinig siya. Nagre-react siya," she said.

One of the highlights of "What If" are Billie (Alessandra De Rossi) and Jecs' (JM de Guzman) fights, which appear more subdued compared to the drama-esque flair in teleseryes. For his part, de Guzman confessed that he found a good friend in his co-star as a result, as she's someone who's reliable enough to understand his problems behind-the-scenes. "Si Alex ay isang mabuting kaibigan. Lahat ng problema mo, nakikinig siya. Kahit hin-



di sa work, kahit anong problema sa buhay, willing kang i-share sa kanya at aalagaan niya 'yun," he said, referring to De Rossi using her nickname. "Hati 'yung oras ko sa work and chikahan namin, so doon ko na-realize na masarap mag-ing kaibigan si Alex." "Marami kaming secrets ni JM pero sa'min na 'yun (JM and I have a lot of secrets but it will only stay between us)," De Rossi said, in a seeming response to her co-star's "problems" before laughing.



5. Alyssa Esqueta
6. Jelly Kiss Soriano, Singer-teacher DK Tijam and Philippine Press Club of Ontario President Rose Tijam opens the show.
7. The students receive their certificate of Appreciation.



DK TIJAM SHOWCASE OF TALENTS

D'AGELESS REBORN

1. Zumba King Jake Garcia leads the class the includes singer and Realtor Jenifer Camacho;
2. Velona Faliva joins the dance workshop;
3. Archie of FV is part of the front act at the TKO concert with Boobsie.
4. Ian Santillan, Jenifer Camacho, Arceli Salazar and friend pose during the break.



Bicol Canada celebrates the feast of Our Lady of Peñafrancia



1. Action Honda General Manager and Chairman of Devotees of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, Rafael Nebres, Lorelei and Joseph Redoblado join the devotees of Our Lady of Penafrancia; 2. Bicol Canada Community Association President Earl Francis Oriño Dacara, wife Cha and daughter Cheska enjoy eat together; 3. Action Honda General Manager Rafael Nebres and Msgr. Ed Pan pose in front of Our Lady of Peñafrancia.



Happy 80th Birthday Kuya Wally Yerro

4. Kuya Wally Yerro blows the candle on his cake; 5. With son Eric, wife Elsie and daughter-in-law Cheryl; 6. With sister Deni, Rosie and Elsinor

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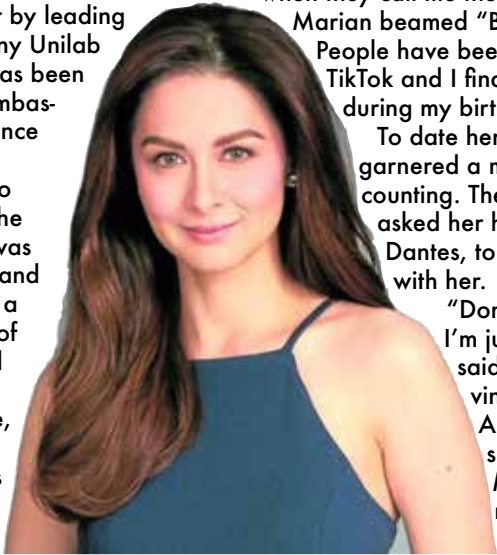
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Marian raring to collaborate with Dingdong for TikTok dance

Marian Rivera was in her element at the launch mounted for her by leading pharmaceutical company Unilab in SM The Block. She has been tapped as the brand ambassador for Solmux Advance Suspension.

With the theme, "Ubo Free, Ganap Ready," the Solmux Advance Jam was hosted by Mike Bustos and Dr. Kilimanguru. It was a fun singing showdown of Gen Z people who had "malamig na boses."

As a health advocate, Marian does not compromise on her family's health, even for cough with phlegm. She



pointed out, "That is why it's important to have an advance mindset."

The Kapuso superstar gamely judged the singing contest, then wowed the crowd with her dancing prowess. "I'm flattered when they call me the new "TikTok Queen," Marian beamed "But I'm in it just for fun. People have been prodding me to do TikTok and I finally decided to join during my birthday last August."

To date her dance videos have garnered a million views—and counting. The hot mama already asked her hubby, Dingdong Dantes, to do a dance collab with her.

"Dong is the real dancer, I'm just for backup," she said. "Looks like he's convinced to join me soon. Abangan" That will be such a cool collab. Marian and Dong are ready to rock steady.

PH named as 'Asia's Leading Dive Destination' for fifth consecutive year

For five consecutive years, the Philippines has been hailed as "Asia's Leading Dive Destination" at the World Travel Awards (WTA) Asia & Oceania Gala Ceremony 2023, which took place in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, on September 6.

This impressive winning streak for the Philippines began in 2019, with consistent competition from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) announced this recognition on Thursday, with its chief Christina Garcia Frasco emphasizing that this achievement reflects the country's unwavering commitment to sustainable tourism development and collaboration with industry stakeholders.

In a statement, she stated: "The Philippines' fifth consecutive win as Asia's Leading Dive Destination further affirms the unparalleled



beauty and mega biodiversity of our country loved by divers and tourists all over the world."

"From our ridges to our reefs, you will never run out of reasons to Love the Philippines," Frasco added.

Established in 1993 by a London-based organization, WTA acknowledges, rewards, and celebrates the triumphs of the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries.

Fatal attraction set in a secluded forest

The psycho-sexy thriller, “Ligaw na Bulaklak” (now streaming on Vivamax), will make you ponder if life imitating art is more powerful than art imitating life. Directed by Jeffrey Hidalgo, it stars Chloe Jenna, Arron Villaflor, Sheila Snow and Jeric Raval.

In the movie, a hunk actor falls into an accident in a secluded forest, where he is held captive by an obsessed fan. Aaah! What fatal attraction can do.

Here are quotes from Chloe (C), Sheila (S) and Jeffrey (J):

C: I’m used to playing loud and aggressive roles. This time, I portray a demure probinsyana with hidden desires.

S: No matter what detractors say about Vivamax, they can’t take away the fact that it keeps the industry alive and makes artists like me comfortable in our own skin.

C: If I were a flower, I would be a rose—beautiful to



look at, but could be dangerous because of thorns.

J: Our movie is like the ‘90s film “Misery.” But instead of a writer as one of the two protagonists, ours is an actor. Even if the plot is similar, just like songs with the same melody, it’s the execution that matters.

C: It’s strange, but when I’m comfortable with someone like with Direk Jeffrey, that’s when I get nervous. He told me to exude class and always look at the bigger picture.

J: As the director, my name is at stake, so I’m open to collaborate. I want the movie to be a collective effort.

Maggie Wilson threatens to file raps vs TikTok influencers calling her, Tim Connor ‘scammers’

Former beauty queen Maggie Wilson called out content creators who allegedly joined a campaign to destroy her and Acasa Manila.

In her Instagram account, Maggie posted on her IG story screenshots of alleged conversations and script of the disinformation campaign against her, her partner Tim Connor and their furniture business Acasa Manila.

“To all the content creators, organizers, and others that participated in this campaign: We have all your names and many of your IDs, places of work, school, etc. Even if the videos were deleted,” she wrote.

“Once we receive it, we will decide whether to include you in our legal action through the criminal justice system. We encourage you to present this within the next 24 hours,” she added.

The influencers reportedly claimed that customers were scammed by Wilson and Connor.

Tim said that they already received apologies



from several TikTok influencers who participated in the campaign.

“What an absolute car crash of a smear campaign,” he wrote.

TikTok user @rolyn_jay already posted an apology video as he admitted that he received P7,000 while P1,000 went to the person who recruited him to do a video attacking Maggie and Tim.

Bicol Canada celebrates Feast of Our Lady of Peñafrancia

S A L A M A T po sa gabos na nag partisipar sa satuyang 2023 Feast Celebration of Our Lady of Peñafrancia!

Maogmang nagkahirilingan asin nagkaburunyog kita gabos sa sarong dakulang selebrasyon sa pag omaw sa satuyang mahal na INA. We were so blessed this year as we had an overwhelming number of participants, and 19+ boats, a fine weather, and a longer parade, a combination of outer and inner lake parade route.

Salamat po saindo gabos:

- The Our Lady of Peñafrancia Devotees
- Bicol Canada Community Association Officers and Board of Directors
- Organizers and sponsors for the monthly Novena,
- Organizers and sponsors for the 9 days daily Novena

and the Fiesta Holy Mass

- Our Lady of Assumption Parish, Rev. Fr. Lorenzo Salandanan
- Our dear priests, Msgr. Ed Pan and Rev. Fr. Norberto Eyule, and Fr. Robbie Paraan
- Philippine Consulate General in Toronto, Consul Mary Grace Villamayor and Consul RJ Sumague
- Member of Parliament Marco Mendicino (Eglington-Lawrence)
- Bluffers Park Yacht Club, Henk Borsboom, Gidget Mary France DT and the volunteer club members/skippers
- All devotees of INA, all Bicolanos in Canada, USA, and around the world, and all the faithful and friends.
- The our sponsors, volunteers, food donors, and new

participants and attendees, salamat po saindo gabos!

- To those I failed to mention, by inadvertence, salamat pong maray!

We pray for all devotees who were not able to join because of personal and inevitable causes.

Despite the challenges this year, we were able to celebrate the Feast Day of our INA. We will carry on, improve and grow every year, through INA’s intercession.

God bless us all! Viva la Virgen!

Diyos Mabalos! See you all next year.

Earl Francis Oriño Dacara
PRESIDENT, Bicol Canada Community Association (BCCA)

Aside from the many masses held by the Bicolano-Canadian community in celebration of the Peñafrancia Fiesta all over Canada, the Bicol Canada Community Association came together and organized a Fluvial Procession in honor of our Ina at the Scarborough Bluffers Park Lake, Toronto, Canada last September 16, 2023.

Considered to be one of the biggest fluvial processions in North America with over 19 boats, devotees from all over Canada and nearby US cities came together under the loving and guiding light of Our Lady of Peñafrancia.



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MARITIME from page 1

rights of our fishermen to fish in the areas where they have been fishing for hundreds of years,” he said.

Once the barrier was removed, Filipino fishermen reeled in 164 tons of fish on their first day, he said.

“That is what our fishermen are missing. So it is not possible to put up such a barrier and it is clear that it is within the Philippines’ territory,” the President added.

Invoking US Defense Pact

Meanwhile, officials of the Biden administration have told lawmakers in the US House of Representatives that Washington is ready to back the Philippines in case its assets, including those of the Philippine Coast Guard, are attacked in the South China Sea.

Appearing before the congressional hearing of the US House of Representatives, US Defense Department’s Deputy Assistant Secretary Lindsey Ford said Washington will certainly invoke its Mutual Defense Treaty with Manila in the event of armed attacks against Philippine assets is amid China’s continued aggression in the disputed waters, including the incidents of laser pointing and water cannon attacks against Philippine personnel.

“The [Defense] department has been incredibly clear when it comes to our treaty commitments to the Philippines,” Ford told members of the House of Representatives sub-committee on Indo-Pacific of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs chaired by Rep. Yong Kim of California.

“We have said repeatedly and will continue to say that we stand by those commitments,” Ford said.

Ford’s assurance came as Kim raised others’ criticisms of the US commitment to the Philippines.

“Is the US prepared to back up its Mutual Defense Treaty with military force? And what message would it send to other countries in the region if the US doesn’t respond forcefully enough to an event that triggers that treaty?” Kim asked Ford.

To prove Washington’s commitment, Ford cited the “credibility” of its military partnership with Manila, which she said is “a bedrock part” of the US security in the Indo-Pacific and globally.

Apart from securing a foothold in the Philippines through the nine Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites across the country, Ford said Washington is also helping an American company operating in Subic operate a shipyard it sees as a “critical strategic infrastructure.”

“The fact that US companies are co-operating and helping to build jobs and

make sure that that strategic area stays in friendly hands, I think, is incredibly important,” Ford said.

US Coast Guard Pacific Area Commander Vice Admiral Andrew Tiongson said the agency is responding to its Philippine counterpart’s requests.

His remark came as Kentucky Rep. Andy Barr raised the Philippine Coast Guard’s concern about the lack of available assets to defend itself.

“[With] the Philippine Coast Guard, we have our largest security sector assistance program with them. In fact, when you talk about assets, we, through the inter-agency partnerships, built an entire training center to help them with operations as well as maintenance of the vessels that they do have,” Tiongson told US lawmakers.

“We have helped them grow their coast guard from 5,000 to their goal of about 35,000. They’re still working on that, but they’re well into that right now. And we have assigned a maritime adviser to them to help along that growth projection,” he added.

The State Department’s Assistant Secretary for Multilateral Affairs Jung Pak also said the State Department is coordinating with allied countries in the region to address the PCG’s concern.

“Part of the State Department’s goals there is to make sure that we’re consulting frequently and in-depth to talk about exactly what the Philippines needs,” Pak said.

In other developments:

- House Deputy Minority leader France Castro on Friday denounced the Chinese Foreign Ministry for accusing the Philippines of intruding in Scarborough Shoal “without their permission,” saying it was China that was intruding on Filipino territory. Castro emphasized that China should recognize the reality that other countries exist in Asia and have their own territories. “China should wake up from its delusion and face reality. The Philippines has every right to protect its territorial integrity and ensure the welfare of its people. China has no right to dictate our actions within our own territory,” she added.
- A group of fishermen asked the government for equipment and security so that they can assist the government in documenting the aggressive behavior of the Chinese in the West Philippine Sea. The group, Bigkis ng Mangingisda Federation held meetings with key government agencies to offer their help in documenting the movement of Chinese vessels in the waters of Bajo de Masinloc and other areas where China conducts illegal activities.

Ricky Davao on Jackie Lou Blanco’s regret over separation: ‘We just have to move on’

After actress Jackie Lou Blanco admitted that she had regrets over their separation, Ricky Davao stressed that the split was “never part of the plan” and that all they could do is to “move on and continue living.”

It can be recalled that the actress admitted in an earlier “Fast Talk” interview that she wished she did not part ways with Davao. “It happened 23 years ago, and we just have to move on... Itong nangyaring ito, wala sa plano ito,” Davao spoke of the split. “You have to accept, move on and continue living. Be positive.” Davao then briefly talked about his current relationship with his non-showbiz girlfriend, saying that his children with Blanco have been very supportive of their father. “They’re very happy for me. Syempre, you know, kailangan maging happy ka naman. They respect that and they’re happy for me,” the actor said. “Nakakatuwa nga kasi (It’s funny because) every time we go out and we meet good friends, [they tell me], ‘Uy Ricky, look at that smile. You’re happy. You’re in love,’” he added.

Davao also became emotional at some part of the interview after he recalled how his daughter Rikki

Mae came out to him as part of the LGBTQ+ community. “Something happened in her school. Nabalitaan ko and nagalit ako. Nag-aayos ako ng shoes noon tapos nagalit ako, binato ko pero hindi naman siya tinamaan. Then she cried,” he recounted.

“The following day, I got a long letter saying sorry and she admitted that she’s different, that she’s part of the LGBT,” he continued. “Of course, natanggap ko naman agad (I accepted her right away) because I love her and I respect [her]—so whatever makes her happy.”

Aside from Rikki Mae, Davao and Blanco have two more children, namely Arabella and Kenneth. Blanco earlier disclosed that she and Davao currently live near each other, and that their children just go back and forth to their parents’ houses.

“We’re not chummy-chummy,” the actress said of her friendship with Davao. “[We have] not-so-long conversations but we do [talk].”



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Young artists told: ‘Your talent can be monetized’

Veteran singer-songwriter Jose Mari Chan recently went viral for his piece of advice to aspiring musicians to take up music as a hobby and have a day job, especially in this day and age of streaming.

From the music community, his comment has also drawn mixed reactions, including counterpoints that it can be a full-time career.

The new Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) president Michelle Nikki Junia said, when asked about it, “Sorry, but I cannot accept that there’s no future, that it cannot put food on the table. It’s really untrue.

“In fact, I want to encourage the artists to thrive even more and to believe that it can be monetized,” said Junia who got her start in the music industry as a child singer and an original member of the 14K (scholars of National Artist for Music Ryan Cayabyab).

“May kanya-kanya tayong calling actually. Hindi lang naman Pilipinas ang may challenge na ganito. Parang trabahuin mo na lahat, ‘wag lang music kasi walang pera diyan.’ Nakaka-sad. How do we create great music, pag-ganyan ang inisip?” she expressed.

Junia further said that music production offers opportunities to earn.

“Music production ang laki ng pera dyan. Ano yung mga musical scoring na ginagamit sa mga digital games, in animations? They get paid in dollars.”

Junia believes kids with musical inclinations and dreams must be fully supported and encouraged.

“Money will come because nag-e-excel ka along the way dahil yun ang passion mo,” said Junia, who runs the school Musikgarten Manila.

Veteran singer-songwriter Vehnee Saturno also encountered resistance and discouragement.

“Ako sabi ng mother ko when I was starting as a musician, ‘Naku anak, ‘di ka makakabuhay ng pamilya niyan,’ that was the ‘70s and nakikinig-kinig na ako ng music.

His breakthrough finally came in 1982. “Then in 1982, I was able to write a song Isang Dakot,” said Saturno of the song that started it all for him in the industry.

He would eventually find more success in composing hits for singers, emerging and established, such as Be My Lady, Sana Kahit Minisan, Mula Sa Puso, etc.

Thus, Saturno advised artists who are still in the early stages of their careers to persist.

“Sa akin, any singer-songwriter and musician, tuloy lang. Given Jose Mari Chan is a very good songwriter and very good singer and a very successful businessman, yun ang pagkakaiba.

“But alam mo ang puso ng isang musikero, hindi pera eh. It’s not about the money. Kung hindi passion niya.”

Saturno, nevertheless, noted that there’s truth in what Chan said.

“But, of course, think wisely, kung papaano ka makakatawid duon, na masaya ka pa rin.”

For Ogie Alcasid, who successfully made a name for himself as both songwriter and singer, everyone is entitled to their opinion and there are certain points of Jose Mari Chan that he agreed with.

“Kanya-kanyang opinion yan ‘di ba. But I

agree with him in the sense before kasi when you write your own songs and produce and they have physical sales of a record and a CD, magkano ang plaka? Ipag-palagay mo lang na P26 or P50. Bumenta ka ng ang Gold nun is 20,000 copies, how much is that? P10 million. Hindi mo kikitain yun sa download. I think that’s what he said, that’s what he’s saying,” Ogie said.

“I used to say, nami-miss ko ang radio and naabutan ko yung time na yun that radio really was the deal breaker. When your song becomes popular on the radio, you have a hit. Now it’s

very genre based so it doesn’t mean if kila-la mo yung Rain-ing in Manila, everybody else knowst.”

Nevertheless, Ogie urged artists to continue streaming.

“But I would still strongly urge our artists to keep streaming. Because the good thing naman that streaming did, everybody is a content creator. You should think of it as also content creation, your song is your content. The world is your market. Makikita mo naman sa metrics mo... There’s direct effect, you’d know right away so I would still encourage them. It’s just different,” he said.



Nikki Junia.



Vehnee Saturno



Ogie Alcasid

They get paid in dollars.

Sharon Cuneta admits undergoing cosmetic surgery, shares weight loss journey

Sharon Cuneta shared that she had surgery to remove excess skin and that she was stressed, which contributed to her losing weight.

In the column of Salve Asis for Pilipino Star Ngayon, the singer-actress shared her recent life updates during the press conference for her and ex-husband Gabby Concepcion’s reunion concert in October.

“I don’t want to hide it naman. Kasi remember, I had reduction sa breasts ko because it was all skin. So, ‘yung tinanggal, mostly skin. And I don’t want to hide it, there’s no reason to, hindi naman nakakahiya,” Sharon shared.

“Because I lost so much weight, over a hundred pounds, naturally, mas sagging ‘yung skin. So, I had arms surgery. Nagpatanggal ako ng balat. Kasi, ang payat-payat ko na, ang laki pa nu’ng balat. So, ipinatanggal lang ‘yung extra skin, ‘yun lang,” she added.

Sharon said she is still recuperating from the surgery.

She also revealed that she was going through stress that contributed to her losing weight, but did not share the cause of her stress.

Sharon added that she went through “forced diet” because she did not have the appetite to eat.

She was shooting her movie with Alden Richards when she noticed her weight loss.

“Yung ikinapayat ko itong last last months, ang bilis. May nag-cause sa akin ng stress. ‘Wag na nating ibalik, ‘wag na nating pag-usapan,” Sharon revealed.



‘Grabe s’ya magmahal’

Chie Filomeno opens up about relationship with Jake Cuenca

Actress Chie Filomeno opened up about her relationship with actor Jake Cuenca.

Chie said she’s not bothered if Jake will only use her as a rebound relationship after he broke up with beauty queen Kylie Verzosa last year.

“I think nasa tamang edad, he’s mature enough na hindi papasok sa isang hindi naman relationship, pero hindi siya papasok sa isang bagay na hindi pa siya ready, fully committed, so I think ‘yun nga, kaya we’re all taking our time,” she said.

“I’m taking my time also. Kasi I’m really private with my relationships before and right now

kasi first time ko ever na may maka-date in this industry na naging public. So we’re taking our time,” she added.

Chie said she and Jake decided to give love another chance between them.

“We’re both misunderstood sa industry by the people around us. Pero kasi, mag-sa-shine kasi talaga ‘yung totoong intentions mo eh. May mga sasabihin ‘yung tao, pero ikaw sa sarili mo kung alam mo you’re in a good place, your heart is in a good place, makikita ng tao ‘yan,” she said.

“And alam niyo kung gaano din kabait si Jake. Alam natin kung gaano niya kama-



hal ‘yung ginagawa niya,” she added. When asked what the best thing about Jake is, Chie said: “What I like about him is grabe siya magmahal.”

“He’s really passionate with his craft, love na love niya ‘yung family niya. He’s really family-oriented. So ‘yun ‘yung i-na-admire ko sa kanya. Mabait talaga siya,” she added.

SHOWBITS

‘Very happy’: James Reid, Issa Pressman share why they’re ‘very in love’

Six months after the soft launch of their relationship at the Harry Styles’ concert, celebrity couple James Reid and Issa Pressman gamely answered questions about their romance.



In an interview with the media during the Preview Ball last week, James said that he’s very in love with Issa.

“There’s no better way to say it. I’m very in love. I’m very happy. The best part about tonight’s that I’m here with Issa,” James said.

For her part, Issa said that the best part of their relationship is they always support each other.

“I have my strengths, he has his, so we just help each other... He’s

sweet, he’s very caring. I would say honestly, because he has Careless under his name, some people would think that he’s careless, but honestly, he’s very caring,” she said.

“He saves all of his time for his family and people he actually really cares about. He’s like a glue to everyone in the office, to his family, and the way that I hear him talk to each member [of Careless] is unbelievable. He has so much love,” she added.

James also described Issa as his sunshine that lights up his day.

“I like to describe Issa as sunshine. That’s how she feels [to me],” he said. “She lights up my day. She inspires me. She’s an incredibly inspiring person, she’s very strong, and I love her values in life. It’s something that I really look for in a partner,” he said.

Last March, James clarified that past rumors alleging that Issa was the reason behind his breakup with Nadine Lustre were just that – rumors.

James, however, gave a hint that he’s happy with his relationship with Issa today.

“I’m only gonna say this once. The past rumors about Issa are just that, rumors,” James wrote on his Instagram story.

Yassi Pressman supportive of sister Issa’s relationship with James Reid

Actress Yassi Pressman assured her support for her sister Issa, who is currently in a relationship with actor-singer James Reid.

Yassi appeared on the September 14 episode of “Fast Talk with Boy Abunda.”

Boy brought up Issa and James’ recent public appearances at fashion brand launches in a Makati mall and at the 2023 Preview Ball.

“I think nasabi na ng lahat ng kailangan sabihin,” Yassi said. “It’s [Issa’s] first time to come out and makasalita in months, galing sa isang napakalalang operasyon.”

The actress stressed that she is happy as long as her sister is happy too, reiterating that she is glad to hear her sister’s voice again.



She also talked about her non-showbiz ex-boyfriend, Jon Semira, with whom she was once engaged prior to their split last August.

“Unfortunately [our relationship] just didn’t go that way, pero at the end of the day I value time I’ve had with a person, lahat ng may malaking ambag sa buhay ko hindi ko makakalimutan,” Yassi fondly said of Jon.

Yassi added that she and Jon are still on talking terms and share businesses together, keeping her thoughts brief out of respect for the privacy of their relationship and of Jon himself.

Boy then asked what Yassi had learned from their relationship, and the actress-model said Jon taught her to go for her dreams and not be afraid to commit.

“For me as a person, seeing now that I’m a bit more mature, I don’t really need to rush into things anymore and feeling ko ngayon lang ako nagkaroon ng pagkakataon to really just focus on myself,” Yassi continued.

When pressed by Boy about lessons on love, Yassi answered that one has to be honest with oneself. Yassi also confirmed that she is not dating politicians Sandro Marcos or Luigi Villafuerte, though she admits being happy in the presence of the latter.

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Why newbie singer had to turn down role in Vilma-Boyet reunion film

Being part of a movie starring Vilma Santos and Christopher de Leon would have been a career-booster for a show biz newcomer like Lizzie Aguinaldo. That’s why she couldn’t help but feel that she missed out on a big opportunity after turning down a role to focus on her studies.

“Nakakapanghinayang because it would have been a big deal for me. I’m just starting out and being offered a project like that was really humbling. It’s just sad that I wouldn’t fit with my schedule in school. Even if I’m already pursuing a career in music, I still have to prioritize my studies,” she said in an interview for her sophomore single, “Lato-lato” (Star Music).

But if it was any consolation, she said, she was able to meet Vilma and Christopher at a media event for their reunion film, “When I Met You in

Tokyo.” “I was just so starstruck because they’re veteran stars and are well-respected in the industry. But they were super nice to me,” related Lizzie, who’s currently in Grade 9.

Instead of focusing on the what-ifs, however, Lizzie decided that she was going to stay positive and believe that other doors will open for her, sooner or later. “Of course, I still want to be able to try acting. I want to have new, different experiences. I want to be a flexible and versatile artist—the kind who can do anything,” she said.



For now, expanding her catalog as a singer is the main goal. After her debut single, the romantic ballad “Baka Pwede Na,” Lizzie opted for a more upbeat and danceable follow-up. Like the repeated sounds and clacking of the popular lato-lato toy, the track is about a confused girl who keeps going back to the person who causes her nothing but pain.

‘Change of style’
“I wanted a change of style... something more fun. I’m comfortable doing ballads and upbeat songs. I would also love to try out other genres, like rock,” Lizzie said about the song, which was composed by filmmaker-songwriter Joven Tan.
“I have been writing my own songs, too. And it’s nice that people are getting

curious about my music since releasing my first single.”
Some of Lizzie’s favorite artists and influences include Taylor Swift, Moira dela Torre and Sarah Geronimo. She also dreams of collaborating with SB19 and her show biz crush, Kyle Echarri.
“What SB19 is doing is so impressive. They get to go around the world and spread their music. They’re incredible performers ... And I feel they just have this aura and presence when they go up onstage. Stell is my bias. But I feel like Justin is a bias wrecker,” she related.
“Kyle, on other hand, has a special charm. Bigla akong kinilig.”
Lizzie has been making the rounds of television variety shows, including “ASAP,” to get a better feel of being on a live stage. “I used to have stage fright. But the more I perform, the more I get used to the situation. Performing in such television shows was just a dream. Now, it’s coming true little by little,” she said.

Dominic Ochoa denies Rico Yan had relationship with Sabrina M



(From left) Dominic Ochoa, Sabrina M, Rico Yan.

Dominic Ochoa stood up for his close friend, the late actor Rico Yan, months after former sexy star Sabrina M claimed that they were in a romantic relationship prior to the heartthrob’s death in March 2002.

Speaking for the first time since Sabrina M made the revelation in July, Ochoa told the entertainment press for the movie “Fruitcake” that it was highly unlikely that Yan had had a liaison with the then sex siren given the

close dates of Yan’s breakup with girlfriend Claudine Barretto and his death.

“Do the math na lang,” Ochoa said in a Inquirer Bandera report. “May lakad kami dapat ng March 5 (2002) nina Rico at Marvin [Agustin] eh. Sabi ni Rico hindi siya makakasama kasi anniversary nila ni Claudine [Barretto], ise-celebrate nila. But it turned out, maghihiwalay pala sila, then March 29 namatay na, so saan papasok ‘yung [relasyon nila ni Sabrina]?”

(Just do the math... Rico, Marvin Agustin, and I had plans to go out on March 5. Rico told us he wouldn’t make it because it was his anniversary with Claudine Barretto at the time, that they would celebrate it. But it turned out that they broke up. Then he died in March 29. How will his “relationship” with Sabrina enter the picture?)

Yan, Agustin and Ochoa were then part of the popular matinee trio called “Whattamen,” which was also the title of their sitcom on ABS-CBN. They were also good friends in real life.

Ochoa further said that while Sabrina M may have crossed paths with Yan at some point in their career, nothing ever blossomed between them.

“Marami namang naggi-guest sa show namin, hindi lang siya (Sabrina M) pero walang ganu’n. Nag-usap nga kami nina Tita at Bobby na patahimikin na, kaya nagbigay ng statement then tapos na,” he said, referring to Yan’s mother Teresita Castro-Yan, and brother, former TV host Bobby Yan.

(There were a blot of people who guested in our show, not just her. But nothing like that ever happened. I talked to Tita and Bobby if they could put the issue to rest. This is why they gave a statement to put an end to this.)

Sabrina M, whose real name is Maricaren Pallasigue,

made headlines last July after saying that she had been romantically involved with Yan for “two years” before his death in March 2002. She claimed that their relationship started when Yan and Barretto already broke up, and that they both opted to keep their relationship private to protect their respective careers.

Barretto, however, contested Sabrina M’s claims and had even tapped lawyer Ferdinand Topacio to threaten the sexy actress with legal action if she would not apologize and retract her statements.

But Sabrina M chose to stand her ground and even appeared to be in fighting form as well when she posed for a picture with several lawyers from the Knowledge Advocate of Volunteer Lawyers days later.

The issue was eventually put to rest after Yan’s mother made an appeal to the public for the parties to stop making speculations about the late actor’s life as he had been dead for 21 years.

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Barbie Forteza ‘super-flattered’ to have Sharon Cuneta’s blessing for ‘Maging Sino Ka Man’ TV remake

When Barbie Forteza was informed that Sharon Cuneta gave her blessing for the remake of 1991 film “Maging Sino Ka Man,” the Kapuso star confessed that she’s “super flattered” that about the latter being “aware” of the TV series.

Cuneta, who became aware of the remake only last July, said while the film “means so much” to her and now-senator Robin Padilla, she believes that Forteza and David Licauco will “make their own mark that [the current] generation would enjoy.”

The actress, when asked about Cuneta’s blessing on the sidelines of the remake’s media conference, appeared to be shocked with the Megastar’s words of wisdom.

“Maraming salamat! Super flattered and overwhelmed na aware na pala ang ating Megastar of this project (Thank you very much! I’m super flattered and overwhelmed that the Megastar is aware of this project),” said Forteza, who’s paired with Licauco in the ongoing show.

As a result, Forteza said she’s more determined than ever to give justice to her dual role as Monique and Dino. “I would just give my very best para hindi siya mapahiya and to give justice to the remake ng iconic film na ginawa po nila (I would just give my very best so she wouldn’t be embarrassed, and to give justice to the remake of this iconic film).”

The Kapuso star then shared that she crossed paths with Cuneta in the past, but it happened when she



was still very young. Even so, she can’t help but recall how “super welcoming” she was at the time. “Nag-meet na kami pero matagal na matagal na. Bagets pa ko n’un. Hindi ko na rin sure kung naalala pa niya pero nag-meet kami noong nanood ako ng movie sa mall,” she said. “Nagkita kami d’un, very surprising. And then noong nagkita kami, super welcoming at warm niya. Nag-pa-picture ako sa kanya, pumayag siya. Ang saya ng feeling.”

(We met before but it was a long time ago. I was still a young girl. I’m not sure if she remembers this but we met when I watched her movie at a mall. We met each other there, it was very surprising. And when we met again, she’s super welcoming and warm. I had a picture taken with her — which she allowed me to. It’s such a joyful feeling.)

As the lead star, Forteza said she “intentionally watched” the original film which made her appreciate Cuneta, Padilla, and Dennis Padilla’s acting prowess, which she described as the “cherry on top.”

“Ang ganda, and pati ‘yung mga bata, kaya noong napanood ko ‘yung original film, lalo akong na-excite na gawin ‘to kasi napanood ko ‘yung original,” she said, while saying she made sure to study the film’s legacy. “Now, I understand why it’s very iconic up to this day.”

The actress also admitted that she was initially daunted by having to

play the contrasting roles of Monique and Dino. She nevertheless learned how to keep up with the remake’s “physical demands” and action-centered genre as filming went on.

“Challenging po sa’kin sa show na ‘to ay ang pagkakaroon ng dalawang characters — sina Monique at Dino. Challenging because maybe the characterization, nuances, magkakai-ba. I need to commend our assistant director dahil cino-consider ‘yung pagpapalit ko ng look from Monique to Dino or Dino to Monique,” she said.

(It’s challenging for me to portray two characters — Monique and Dino. It’s challenging because the characterization and nuances are different. I need to commend our assistant director because they considered the switch from Monique to Dino, and vice versa.)

“Yung physical demands of not just the character but also the show itself, the genre, ‘yung requirement na lagi kang ready. Hindi ako sanay sa action talaga. Lampa talaga ako sa totooong buhay, so isa ‘yun sa malalaking adjustments na ginawa ko sa proyektong ito,” she further added.

(The physical demands of not just the character but also the show itself, genre, and requirement to always be ready. I’m not used to the action genre. I have a low endurance in real life, so it’s one of the adjustments I need to do.)

“Maging Sino Ka Man” is the follow-up project of Forteza’s successful onscreen pairing with Licauco after “Maria Clara at Ibarra.”

Now I know why it’s iconic up to this day

Dolly de Leon now a free agent, believes Iti Mapukpukaw has a shot at Oscars nod

Dolly de Leon is “super proud” after Iti Mapukpukaw was named as the Philippines’ official entry at the 2024 Oscars. The veteran actress, who stars in the Carl Joseph Papa-directed animated film with Carlo Aquino and Gio Gahol, strongly believes it has a “shot” at getting that first Oscars nomination for the country.



Dolly starred in three of the seven films considered for submission to the Best International Feature category of the 96th Academy Awards.

But it was the Best Film winner and top-grosser at the recent Cinemalaya 19 that got chosen by the screening committee formed by the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP).

“Sobra akong proud because Iti Mapukpukaw is a story that needs to be heard by a lot of people who had been victimized by abuse at a very young age... And victims tend to, you know, hide and shy away from this topic because they have a strong feeling of shame,” Dolly said.

“So, for this film to come out, it’s our way of telling them, it’s okay to voice out your pain, it’s okay to come out and tell the world that you were abused as a child and that we will always accept you with loving arms, despite that.

Dolly also confirmed during the interview that she’s now a free agent in the Philippines.

“I’m quite satisfied and comfortable not having anyone represent me. But if the right company comes along, I’m open to it,” she said on the question if she’s open to joining a new talent management team.

“If it’s a reputable group that can represent me well, why not?” she added.

For her overseas work, Dolly’s agent continues to be the Los Angeles-based Gersh, while her management is Fusion Entertainment.

Pia nag sorry sa paghawing ng security sa National Artist na si Ricky Lee

Ibang artista feeling sikat ‘pag may mga marshal

At least nanghingi pala ng sorry si Miss Universe 2015 Pia Wurtzbach kay National Artist for Film and Broadcast Ricky Lee dahil sa issue ng hawian na naganap sa Manila International Book Fair.

Nag-viral nga ang paghahawing ng marshal ni Pia kay Sir Ricky nung batiin at kamayan siya ni Pia sa ginanap na book launching ng dating Miss Universe ng librong Queen of the Universe: A Novel na ginanap sa SMX Convention Center.

Kumalat sa video na naglalakad si Pia papunta sa stage na pinaliligiran ng security team.

At nang kamayan ng dating beauty queen hinaringan ito ng isang



marshal kaya nahawi ang kamay ni Sir Ricky.

Binatikos dito si Pia at hindi matanggap ng maraming senior citizen ang pinakitang walang respetong ginawa ng nasabing marshal.

Pero nag-reach out na pala si Pia ayon kay Kuya Boy Abunda.

“Nag-reach out na si Pia, even if it was not Pia’s fault, to apologize, to say sorry na nangyari ito.

“So, naayos na ito pero leksyon ho sa atin dahil importante na tinatrato ho natin – well, no. 1, seniors, no.2, this was a book fair, this was a cultural event.

“Actually, may batas po, eh, kung paano itinatrato ang mga National Artist,” bahagi ng pahayag Kuya Boy.

Pero sa true lang, grabe ngayon ang mga security / marshal ng mga artista.

May isang female celebrity rin na grabe kung manghawi ang mga marshal.

Saka hindi basta hawi, parang talagang bastusan na kulang na lang itulak ka.

May dalawang actor din na ganun ang mga marshal. ‘Yung isa may karapatan namang bantayan pero ‘yung isa sa totoo lang, hindi naman pinagkakaguluhan pero parang pakiramdam ata ay sikat siya kaya talagang ang security pero hindi naman nilalapitan ng fans.

Actually, parang mas naging madrama ngayon ang mga celebrity.

Parang laging sasaktan ng fans o ng mga tao samantalang selfie lang naman ang habol ng iba na pwede naman nilang sabihing hindi pwede kung talagang walang chance.

Iba naman ang orientation ng fans sa Korea or sa Japan.

Sa Korea, hindi masyadong nakakalapit ang fans dahil talagang mahigpit sila, ganundin sa Japan. Bawal i-video ang mga celebrity kahit nasa open area at nagpe-perform.

Pero sa atin, open to everyone. Parang sa Bangkok, Thailand.

‘Yun ang epekto ng social media na ginagamit din ng mga celebrity para sa mga content nila.

Ivana Alawi pranks sister Mona with dream car as birthday gift

Content creator-turned-actress Ivana Alawi gave her youngest sister Mona a brand new car for the latter’s 19th birthday.

Ivana disguised the giving of the car as a prank, as she is often known to do, as seen in a video uploaded on her YouTube channel last September 5.

The actress informed viewers that everyone else in her family was in on the prank – pretend to get into an accident with the new car and the driver (actually a hired actor) would start an argument.

Early on in the video, Ivana explained that she had shot a fake birthday video for Mona during a trip to Hong Kong so that her younger sister would not get any inkling of the prank.

Mona turned 19 last August 19.

Ivana bought a black 2023 Ford Territory Titanium X, which she purchased for P1.6 million with stacks of P1,000 bills. It was revealed that the car was Mona’s dream car, which the former child actress planned to save up for.

During the lengthy fake fight, Ivana “attempted” to settle the “conflict.” The situation escalated, leaving Mona worried.

Mona burst into tears upon learning the whole set-up was staged and the car was going to be hers.

“Sobra-sobra, parang ‘di ko alam paano tanggapin. Ewan ko kung ano ginagawa para i-deserve ‘to, it’s too much?” Mona said, to which Ivana replied, “Girl, ang ginawa mo ay lumabas ka sa world na ‘to. Sobra-sobra na, lahat kami napapasaya mo sa ngiti at iyak mo.”

Mona promised to take her family out on drives, including driving Ivana to her tapings. The video ended with Mona trying out the car for a test drive.

Ivana mentioned she planned the prank while in a taping, which might have been the shooting of “FPJ’s Batang Quiapo,” as she is a recent addition to the series’ cast.





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SB19, Ivana Alawi, Francine Diaz among TikTok Awards Philippines 2023 winners

Content creator and pharmacist Arshie Larga was the top winner of the 2023 TikTok Awards Philippines, recognized as this year's TikTok Creator of the Year.

The ceremony was held last month at the Newport Performing Arts Theater where TikTok creators from different categories were voted by the public as their favorites while others were selected by a panel of judges.

Among the big-name winners were vlogger-turned-actress Ivana Alawi for Shop Creator of the Year, Viy Cortez for Brand Owner of the Year and Krizel Yuson for Livestreamer of the Year.

One of the earliest TikTok users, Carlyn Cabel, was named Popular Creator of the Year. She thanked her husband Von Ordonia for pushing her to continue encouraging followers to vote for her win in her ac-



Francine Diaz and Ivana Alawi

ceptance speech.

Christy Tabanyag, better known as Miss Deliciousness, was named Rising Star of the Year. She admitted she had initially lost hope in the first three days of voting to one of the event's hosts, Mikee Reyes, but she eventually topped the vote rankings.

Other major winners were actress Francine Diaz for Celebrity Creator of the Year and SB19's hit track "Gento" for Filipino Song of the Year.

"Ang pinaalam ko sa nanay ko may pupuntahan lang ako sa bayan, pag-uwi ko may award

pa ako!" Arshie began his acceptance speech, thanking God, his family and supporters.

Arshie looked back on his three years as a TikTok creator. He noted how his content remains relevant and how viewers continue to appreciate his work.

The pharmacist also acknowledged the individuals whose inspiring stories he shares on TikTok and the people who donated money for him to be able to give free medicines to those who cannot afford them.

"Lahat naman tayo nage-excel sa kanya-kanyang mga niche, so 'yung award na 'to ay para sa ating lahat," Arshie told his fellow creators. "Let's always use our platforms wisely and responsibly, and 'yung clout natin gamitin sa tamang paraan — not just to entertain but to inspire."

Boy Abunda gets busy with 'Just One, Isa Lang' project

Boy Abunda is again busy with another valuable project called Just One, Isa Lang movement.

"My goal is to provoke and inspire a mindset of goodness to everyone. There is so much negativity and hatred in this world. There are lots of bashing and negative comments on social media. The world has turned bleak and somber. The project is about motivating people to do just one good thing every day. Just a simple act of kindness to others can make this world a much better place to live in," Boy explained.

It is no secret how Boy proudly proclaims his love for his mother, and this love inspires him to establish a foundation that also believes that loving Nanay is tantamount to loving Tatay and the rest of the family. Boy continues to deliver this message by reminding his viewers to always stay kind and make their Nanay and Tatay proud.

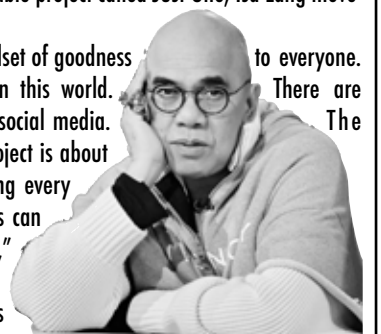
This seed of goodness will slowly grow and transform the world if every person can deliberately do kindness to one another. "Positivity is the antidote to toxicity. It is the only way to counterattack negativity. Imagine if every person can do one good thing daily, and it becomes a habit. That one act of goodness can become two, three, and more each day," Boy shared.

Just One, Isa Lang is a catchy title and aims to appeal to all sectors of society so more people can participate in this movement. Boy has interviewed over a hundred celebrities about the single good thing they have done on a particular day. Soon, he will start talking to people from all walks of life about how they express kindness to others.

"The answers I get from celebrities are varied. These include hugging a friend, saying I love you, apologizing to someone, telling the truth, listening to my Mom, waking up smiling, telling my wife thank you, and many more. These good deeds are immeasurable."

"I always apologize when I think I have offended someone. Saying sorry humbles me. It brings me back to my core. Doing good things does not require a status or hierarchy. This is what I want to apply in Just One, Isa Lang mind movement."

Just One, Isa Lang is set to be launched via TikTok and @therealboyabunda this October, his birth month.



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Bea Alonzo had ‘unreasonable demands, expectations’ during ‘1521’ filming, producer says

A representative of the “1521” producer addressed claims of Bea Alonzo’s disappointing experiences during the film shooting, and stressed that they have fulfilled what was stated in their contract with the actress.

In a statement sent to INQUIRER.net, the film producer Francis Ho’s rep refuted and made clarifications on each of the claims by Alonzo’s staff.

The rep asserted that Ho paid for Alonzo and her team’s hotel accommodation during filming.

However, the actress brought with her additional staff “which is not in the signed contract, so hindi sinagot ng producer ang (so the producer did not pay for the) additional room.”

The rep further noted that the movie actors stayed at high-end hotels in Palawan, hence their rooms included showers and even swimming pools.

Alonzo also allegedly did not show up during the fitting schedule for her film costume, then later “wanted to redesign the costume according to her style.”

“She refused to have [her costume] fixed by the production-design-contracted tailor. So she ended up paying for the repair herself since she refused the services of the production tailor,” the rep said.

The producer’s camp further belied claims that the talents and dancers were not compensated; that there were no transportation services for them; and that their snacks and drinks were provided by the actress. As per the former’s statement, there were instances when Alonzo offered to buy food for the talents but that it’s not true that she was the only one providing those.

“All talents were paid. We have payroll receipts from all talents,” the rep stressed. “Dancers volunteered their services (free talents) because they believed in the mission of ‘1521.’ They offered their services for free. There was no promise of compensation or picture taking with Bea.”

The rep also responded to several other claims by Alonzo’s staff and clarified that the producer had rented and bought filming equipment himself; that the air-conditioned tent at the filming was delayed only for the first three days of shooting; that the film director Michael Bader suffered an injury because of an accident during break time and not during the filming; and that real bolos were only used for still photos and not during fight scenes.

“Everything that the producer agreed to in contract with Bea, he fulfilled,” the pro-

ducer’s camp stated. “Bea had unreasonable demands and expectations not stated in the contract that the producer did not accommodate because it was not agreed upon and/or they were unreasonable.”

They also noted that Alonzo’s “1521” co-star, Hollywood actor Danny Trejo, had no complaints regarding the film production and has remained “good friends” with pro-

ducer Ho. Alonzo has yet to publicly comment as of this writing.

Olivia Rodrigo reaches #1

Only 20 years old, Olivia is the California born and bred daughter of a school teacher Jennifer and a family therapist, Chris Rodrigo, who I love mentioning is Filipino. That means that Olivia is

part-Pinoy and we should all be proud of what she has accomplished and will most likely accomplish in the future.

Olivia was already doing well as Disney’s newest leading lady in High School Musical: The Series when she recorded her own composition Driver’s License. The song made Olivia a star. She has not stopped singing since. She released a big selling album, sour, went on tour, became a celebrity and

worked on her crucial sophomore album. Olivia can certainly write and she has this ability to bring in listeners to her personal situation and share the experience with them, like ballad of a home-schooled girl, which I found out, she really was. And she can sing, listen to her hit those high notes in the sad making the bed.



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The satellites will detect “dark vessels,” ships that switched off their GPS

DARK SHIPS from page 1
ippines’ capacity to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, as well as protect its marine environments, he said. “We are prepared, pending the conclusion of the implementing agreement, to deploy the system in the coming weeks,” Hartman said.

Canada’s Dark Vessel Detection Program is part of its 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy aimed at

helping developing countries, like the Philippines, find illegal fishing vessels and protect fish stocks.

Canada has been actively bolstering its security partnerships and increasing its naval presence in the region as part of its Indo-Pacific strategy—which described China as an “increasingly disruptive global power.”

In September alone, three Royal Canadian Navy ships visited the country—the HMCS

Ottawa, the supply ship MV Asterix and the HMCS Vancouver, which will join Exercise Sama-Sama.

“The Vancouver’s participation in Sama-Sama is to promote regional security cooperation, maintain and strengthen maritime partnerships and enhance maritime interoperability,” the ship’s skipper, Cmdr. Meghan Coates, said in the same briefing.

“We are honored by the opportunity to participate in this

complex multilateral exercise, highlighting collaboration between like-minded partners, training and real-world environments,” she said.

Naval exercises

The bilateral drill aims to further strengthen international defense cooperation and advance a rules-based international order while enhancing the Philippine Navy’s warfare capabilities, the Armed

Forces of the Philippines said last week. Japan and the United Kingdom will also send ships to Sama-Sama, while Australia and France will send their teams for subject matter exchanges on naval warfare and disaster response. Indonesia and New Zealand will be joining as observers.

Hartman said Canada’s participation in Sama-Sama was “doing in deeds what we said we would do in words.”

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Carla Abellana doesn't

Carla Abellana has signed up with All Access to Artists (AAA), the same talent management team behind Marian Rivera and Maine Mendoza.

Carla Abellana has made it clear that she doesn't need to rush into a new relationship just to find healing and happiness for herself.

After the breakdown of her marriage, the actress has obviously chosen to focus on herself and her career. "Hindi naman po kailangan. Hindi naman po sa hindi maganda, pero pa-rang hindi naman po kailangan ang ganun na paraan or way to move on by papalitan (replacement) or what," Carla recently said during a no-holds-barred presscon after she was introduced as the latest actress to sign up with All Access to Artists, the same talent management company behind the careers of Marian Rivera and Maine Mendoza.

"Hindi ka tunay makakapag-move on kung ganun lang na ire-replace niyo lang po. Hindi po kayo makapag-heal talaga kung ganoon lang talaga, 'di ba?"

She reiterated, "Hindi po talaga kailangan. Sarili niyo lang kelangan.



need a new relationship to move on

"At the end of the day, sarili niyo rin ang sasalo sa sarili niyo" the actress said.

This is not to say that Carla is shutting the door on falling in love and marrying again.

She said "Sa ngayon, ayoko pa isipin."

She admitted that she's receiving feelers from non-showbiz guys, but denied being "traumatized" by showbiz ones. "What she learned from her own experience with heart-break is that women are stronger than they are perceived to be. "From how I see it, women are different nowadays. Mas mukha pang malakas ang kababaihan ngayon."

"But the women are stronger. No matter what, alam mong yung babae, kaya niya. Alam mong kaya mo. You should never feel alone. You have it in you. Just don't give up on yourself."

One possible reason why Carla is this open with not even the slightest sign of displeasure at answering even the most controversial of questions is because she has finally moved on. To use her words, she has firmly closed that chapter in her life.

"Definitely. Nahanap ko na po yung aking peace. Talagang nasara ko na po yung chapter na iyon ng aking buhay," she said.

"Lagpas-lagpas pa po, kumbaga, sa pagmo-move on. So, masayang-masaya po. Definitely, I'm happy with my life. I'm happy where I am, pati po sa kung sino ako today."

According to Carla, there's no singular formula for recovering from heartbreak. But she knew she was able to after finally coming to peace with herself.

For her, moving and having peace are the same. "As long as you've found your peace and wala ka nang bigat na dala-dala, you can say that you've moved on already," she said.

Of course, it was a long and arduous process. "Akala po natin 'di ba madali yong, 'I forgive you'... But it's very hard to do or give. Saka mas na-realize ko gaano siya ka-importante para sa sarili niyo po. I've realized more how important forgiveness is for yourself, not for the person you're giving your forgiveness to," she reflected.

"So, of course, it was a long process. Mahabang panahon at hindi po naging madali pero hinayaan ko lang po. Hindi ko po pinilit 'yung sarili ko (I didn't force myself). I took my time."

PNP backs harsher road rage penalties

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has expressed support for a proposal for stiffer penalties for people involved in road rage incidents.



Enacting a law that will impose severe sanctions will deter hot-headed motorists from hurting other vehicle users, according to PNP spokesman Col. Jean Fajardo.

"Enacting laws, particularly addressing road rage, will be supported by your national police," Fajardo told reporters.

Sen. JV Ejercito said enacting a law against road rage may be a deterrent for such type of abuse.

The police have so far documented several road rage cases, the latest of which involved dismissed policeman

Wilfredo Gonzales, who threatened a cyclist with a handgun during a traffic altercation in Quezon City last Aug. 8.

A similar incident occurred in Valenzuela City last Aug. 19, where a Toyota Fortuner driver wielded a handgun when he approached a taxi driver.

The PNP Firearms and Explosives Office has revoked the firearms license of the unnamed motorist.

The motorist must surrender his firearm, a .9 mm caliber handgun, to the police.

If he refuses to comply, Fajardo said the driver could face charges for violation of Republic Act 10591, or the Comprehensive Law on Firearms and Ammunition.

"We don't want these road rage incidents to increase," Fajardo said.

Alex Eala earns first Asiad bronze

Alex Eala bowed out of the 19th Asian Games singles tennis tournament with her head held high, as she copped a bronze medal following a valiant 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-3 loss to top-seeded, world No. 23 Zheng Qinwen in Hangzhou, China.

Despite the loss, the 18-year-old Eala still won



Philippine tennis' first Asian Games medal since 2006, when Cecil Mamiit also won bronze in men's singles competition in Doha, Qatar.

Eala's second-set win also a great sign of things to come, as it marked the first time in her career she won over a player inside the World Tennis

Association's (WTA) top 25. The BSKE will be held October 30.

Bunny Paras ecstatic over daughter Moira's engagement

Bunny Paras could not seem to contain her joy as she announced that her daughter Moira is set to tie the knot with her boyfriend Nicholas Asbury soon.

The former actress showed photos from when Moira, her daughter with disability, said yes to Asbury, as seen on Bunny's Instagram page on Thursday, Sept. 28. Asbury popped the question at Asbury Park in New Jersey.

"Congratulations Moira Greenway and Nicholas Asbury," the celebrity mom said. "I'm so happy I can't ask for anything more. You are both an inspiration and to Nick, thank you for loving my Moira unconditionally."

"I can't wait to see you both again



soon," added Bunny, who appears to be currently away from her daughter. "May God bless you both and your love for

Bunny Paras' daughter Moira and her fiancé Nicholas Asbury.

each other."

Fellow celebrities congratulated the couple for their engagement, with singer Jamie Rivera admiring their "true love."

Moira is Bunny's daughter with radio personality Mo Twister. Moira suffered from Friedreich ataxia, an "inherited condition that affects the nervous system and causes movement problems" according to the Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center, which affected her ability to walk.

Durham Filipino Festival



1. Jairus Monzon and Thea Asedillo sing the national anthems; 2. The emcees that graced the festival were Viviene Lotilla-dela Cruz, Jelly Soriano - Angeles, Gizele Mirasol, Tin Pascual, and Princess Lerie Ammugauan; 3. MP and Minister for small Business Rechie Valdez pose with Jasmine Sweets' Jasmine Samonte; 4. Recognition was awarded to Li Eron (5TH FROM RIGHT) from our MP Federal minister of small business honourable Rechie Valdez along with our beloved Congen - Angelica C. Escalona and Clarington councilor Granville Anderson and Durham Filipino fest officials.

CASAROCA GALA

5. FV Foods owner Mel Galeon poses with lanezza Muñoz Greeley
6. lanezza Muñoz Greeley with family



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7. Father Gerardo Bandallan enjoys the celebration with sponsor FV Foods owner Mel Galeon.

Cebuana hitmaker **Therese Villarante** pens multimedia novel *‘Girl with a Broken String’*

AT A GLANCE
Girl with a Broken String tells the journey of Sam, a young singer-songwriter whose first love, J, has left her with no explanation. To deal with the heartbreak, Sam starts a blog with letters and songs to reach out to him.

Therese Villarante-Langit who is known for co-writing the Bisaya hit songs “My Morena Girl” (sung by Hey Joe Show) and “Bok Love” has written a novel entitled Girl with a Broken String that combines storytelling, music and art. US-based author Demetria Head, host of “A Look Inside” podcast, describes Therese’s debut novel as a “testament to the power of creativity and innovation in literature, providing readers with



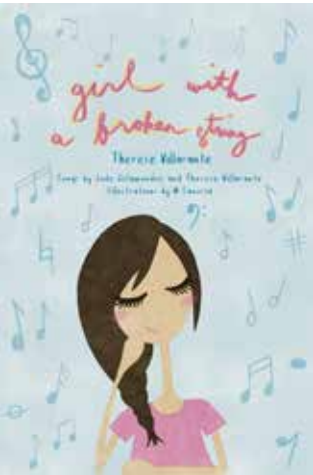
a truly unforgettable and emotionally charged reading experience.”

Girl with a Broken String tells the journey of Sam, a young singer-songwriter whose first love, J, has left her with no explanation. To deal with the heartbreak, Sam starts a blog with letters and songs to reach out to him.

The story is loosely-based on Therese’s personal experience. “I was 23, never had a boyfriend and unceremoniously abandoned by the boy who, at that time, was my closest romantic encounter,” she reveals in the book’s introduction.

From there, Therese wrote “Song on a Broken String” which was eventually chosen as a finalist in 2014 Philpop Song-writing Competition and interpreted by Nicole Asensio.

That single song would be the springboard



for an innovative novel that Therese would complete nine years later with musical director Jude Gitamondoc, illustrator M Sanoria, animator Lee Anthony Pada, performing artist Ivy Gallur and singer Daryl Leong.

Unveiled last June in Therese’s hometown of Cebu City, Girl with a Broken String, the printed novel, was also introduced at the recently concluded Manila International Book Fair. The e-book version (available on Amazon and Apple) was launched on Sept. 30 in Quezon City.

The Girl

GETTING TOGETHER



Rianneh Greeley enjoys time with her stepsister

with a Broken String singers are also among the featured artists at BGC Art Center’s Pinoy Playlist Music Festival.

“What is amazing to me is that our debut novel occupies literary spaces and musical halls. Our book is found in both shelves and stages,” Therese declares excitedly. “I’m so grateful to experience this as a storyteller.”

For more information, follow Girl with a Broken String on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Listen to the Girl with a Broken String songs on Spotify.

For more information on the author, visit theresevillarante.com.

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Alex Calleja: A comedian on and off camera

Alex Calleja's familiar face is seen daily on the TV5 program FACE TO FACE. He also happens to be the only thorn among roses in TIK TALKS, the weekly talk show aired over TV5 and Cignal TV that's hosted by Korina Sanchez-Roxas, Kakai Bautista, G3 San Diego and myself.

I met Alex many years ago when he was one of the writers of ABS-CBN's It's Showtime. But it was only when we both moved to NET25 (where he hosted Funniest Snackable videos) that we had more time to chat and then eventually became co-hosts of TIK TALKS. In one of our conversations, he shared that he is the youngest of nine siblings, and that his mom had him when she was 42 years old. His wife is the daughter of a general so when he would fetch her at work, he would commute; but going home, he would be driving her car.

Alex admitted that his childhood and growing-up years in Bangkal, Makati were a rollercoaster ride, because for one, his dad was a certified gambler and womanizer. But it is precisely because Alex's life was and is

so colorful that he has such a wealth of stories and experiences to share and draw humor from.

Alex is your typical "maginoo pero medyo bastos" kind of Pinoy. During our tapings, he never fails to make us laugh. And since he will be celebrating his 51st birthday on Oct. 6 with a show entitled The One, an all-new stand-up comedy material at the New Frontier Theater (his actual birthday is on Oct. 7), I want to shine the Q&A spotlight on Alex, who I personally consider to be one of the best stand-up comedians in the Philippines today.

During the pandemic, the name Alex Calleja became a household name. How did this happen?

"It was during the pandemic that I was able to penetrate the online world when one of my stand-up comedy bits from 2019 went viral with 1.2 million views. I already had an online pres-

ence pre-pandemic, so I took advantage of this and did a lot of online shows. It snowballed and people watched my YouTube and shared it to Tiktok and other social media platforms."

You're one of the few male standup comedians in Manila. What is your brand of humor?

"My humor is similar to Jokoy's, which is point-of-view and monologue stand-up comedy. I talk about my personal experiences and general topics ranging from family to current events."

Can you tell us about your journey from being a writer to becoming a standup comedian?

"I actually started as a stand-up comedian first. And because I write my own jokes, I easily adjusted to becoming a writer. The reason why I became a writer is for longevity reasons. You can't just rely on being an on-camera talent, you must also have off-camera skills to stay longer in showbiz."

Did you aspire to become a standup comedian when you were growing up?

"No, I wanted to become a leading man, but I didn't have the looks and the height! Yes, I



Alex Calleja admitted that his childhood and growing-up years in Bangkal, Makati were a rollercoaster ride, because for one, his dad was a certified gambler and womanizer. But it is precisely because Alex's life was and is so colorful that he has such a wealth of stories and experiences to share and draw humor from. Photos show the many funny faces of Alex.

always wanted to be a comedian (on stage or in the movies) because I love telling stories and making people laugh."

What is the Filipino audience like?

"Filipinos have a very short attention span and it's hard to

'I have no regrets, just lessons. I have no future plans because I'm already living my life. And if there will be new opportunities, I'll deal with them when they come.'

make them laugh. If you're able to make them laugh, grab the opportunity and be sure to make them laugh again in 30 seconds."

What is the best compliment you've received?

"When a guy approached me and said that I made his mom laugh (she was very sick) and

OFWs who send me messages that I help them overcome their homesickness."

And the worst thing that ever happened to you as a standup comedian?

"The worst? When I was asked to perform after an 'In Memoriam.' Awkward..."

They say comedians are funny in front of the camera but lead very lonely and sad lives. Are you one of those?

"No, I am a comedian on and off camera."

How does your family deal with your success?

"We are now financially better compared to before, so we are able to buy things and travel. But we are basically the same, we still live in the same house, and they

are happy for me, especially when people recognize me or when traffic enforcers let us off the hook because they recognize me! Hahaha!!!

Regrets and future plans?

"That I did not experience having really long hair... I have no regrets, just lessons. I have no future plans because I'm already living my life. And if there will be new opportunities, I'll deal with them when they come."

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Joey De Leon agrees with Michael V: ‘Mahirap na ngayon magpatawa. Marami na ngayong namumuna’

E.A.T. host Joey De Leon couldn’t agree more with fellow comedian Michael, who earlier said that it’s not as easy to make people laugh or throw a punchline as it used to be.

On Oct. 1, De Leon tweeted: “Mahirap na ngayon magpatawa. Marami na ngayong namumuna. Tingin nila mas magaling sila. Sila ang dapat narito pala. Eh ano ang tawag sa kanila? Kung sa lugar mo ay ang tagal mo na? Mas kwela sila palagay nila. Ayun...inggitero at inggitera.”

Michael V made a similar statement when he was honored at the 3rd Philippine Film Industry Month of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

“Every year, every generation, mas nagiging mahirap magpatawa. We get more and more restrictions when making jokes and punchlines. (Every year, every generation, it be-

comes harder to laugh. We get more and more restrictions when making jokes and punchlines.)

“Nowadays hindi ka na pwedeng mag joke sa superhero na African-American, na bading, na suicidal na pulis, na may kapansanan. (Nowadays, you can’t joke about an African-American superhero who is gay, who is a suicidal cop, who is disabled.)

“Kahit na ang punchline mo ay walang kinalaman sa race, sa gender, sa mental at sa physical health ng isang tao, yun at yun ang pupunahin ng mga netizens na mga dalubhasa na ngayon. (Even if your punchline has nothing to do with a person’s race, gender, or mental



and physical health, netizens who claim to be experts will criticize it.)

“It takes a certain level of intelligence to come up with a very entertaining punchline but a very shallow level of opinionated ignorance to destroy.

“It turns out comedy is less universal than before. What’s funny to some may not be funny to others anymore.

“Pero ang totoong komedyante at hindi magpapapigil. We learn, we adopt, we persevere.

(But the real comedian will not hold back. We learn, we adapt, we persevere.)

‘We’re gonna be married for the rest of our lives’: Catriona Gray, Sam Milby enjoy wedding planning

Celebrity couple Sam Milby and Catriona Gray revealed that they are enjoying their wedding planning.

Philstar.com asked the couple about their wedding preparation during the red carpet of ABS-CBN Ball 2023 held at Shangri-La Makati last Saturday.

“We’re just really taking out time on the planning and enjoying our time as

“I (FINALLY) put a ring on it! I love you my forever koala... now my fiancé,” Sam wrote.

Kris Aquino: ‘I AM NOT IN A RELATIONSHIP’

Kris Aquino took to Instagram recently to update fans about her health.

She also made clear she is not in a rela-



tionship.

In her post, Kris explained it was her sisters who urged her to clear up her current status.

“I AM NOT IN A RELATIONSHIP,” she wrote in bold letters.

“We no longer communicate, and my sons and I feel more PEACEFUL. No details because I value my privacy and respect his, and I chose to only give the FACTS that should be addressed,” she said.

Kris didn’t mention names but she was romantically linked most recently to Batangas Vice Governor Mark Leviste.

As to her her health condition, she related, “I don’t have my complete blood panel results yet BUT GUMANDA my inflammatory numbers... I don’t know what good I did but I know I’m surviving all the side effects of methotrexate and my biological injectable because God is listening to all your prayers for my healing.”

“Praying more that in 18 to 20 months I’ll reach remission and after 6 months I’ll have my doctors’ clearances and we can go home. I miss my sisters, my cousins, my PH doctors, my close friends, and of course all of you...

“It’s already been 16 months. We’re already settled in our rental home -- location-wise, this is my long wished for vibe -- we have a pool in the back with an unobstructed view of the blue sea and with this super fresh, cool sea breeze... plus we’re only 10 minutes away from 1 of my doctors,” she added.



engaged couple because we’re gonna be married for the rest of our lives,” Catriona said.

“We just want to enjoy,” she added.

It was Sam and Catriona’s first time to walk on the ABS-CBN Ball red carpet together. The couple seem like getting married in their outfits - Catriona in a sparkling white gown with baby blue boa, and Sam in a black-and-white suit by Edwin Tan.

The “Pinoy Big Brother” alumnus and Miss Universe 2018 announced that they are engaged last February.

In their respective Instagram accounts, the couple posted the same photos of them together.

“Living in an answered prayer with my best friend. I love you, fiancé (eeeeee) @samuelmilby,” Catriona captioned her post.

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Andres Muhlach still undecided to join showbiz, wants to finish studies first

He is undoubtedly showbiz royalty. His grandma was the late actress Amalia Fuentes. His parents are award-winning actor Aga Muhlach and actress-beauty queen Charlene Gonzales. Former child superstar Niño Muhlach is an uncle, actresses Arlene Muhlach and Almira Muhlach are his aunts.

However, while his relatives started their acting careers early on, good-looking and towering Andres Muhlach remains undecided whether or not he will venture into show business and follow in the footsteps of his parents and popular relatives.

"Grabe, you're putting me on the spot," Andres said. "We'll see if the opportunity is there already, why not? Right now, I'm still thinking about it. I'm still thinking about the options and opportunities. I'm still waiting on what my parents have to say. I still have a year left with my studies. I'm considering taking the rest of my studies online, but I will do it here in Manila."

Turning 22 in November, Andres' priority is to finish his studies at a university in Spain, where he is taking up a Business and Communications course.

"I'm not sure yet what I'll do

after college," he said. "I have to graduate first. We'll see where it goes after I graduate."

His twin sister, Atasha, recently graduated with honors from the Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom, where she completed her Business Management

degree. Atasha, however, got the green light from her parents to join showbiz.

"I'm very, very happy for her," Andres said. "I've known for a while that she really wanted to pursue showbiz. That's really her dream. We will always support her."

The brother is protective of his twin sister, who recently signed up a management contract with Viva Artists Agency (VAA) and joined E.A.T. as one of the hosts.

Possible suitors of Atasha are "scared of me," Andres smiled. "I'm like her first wall. If there's someone out there who wants to court her, they have to go through me."

Andres, who was recently in Manila on a school break, shared how he's enjoying his life as a student in Spain. "Being able to walk to the school every day, 30 minutes going there and 30 minutes back, I really like to walk," Andres shared.

"Even my groceries, I really have to count them. Sometimes, I don't even have enough money to do the grocery, so I count my coins."



...with twin sister Atasha watching a FIBA game

He's proud that he learned how to cook chicken mechado, his favorite dish. "I'm a chicken guy, so the very basic cooking for chicken, I can do that."

Andres and Atasha grew up in Batangas away from the glare of

"My sister and I just grew up playing outdoors, biking, hiking. I really love basketball. Almost every day, I play basketball. I've played basketball with Grae (Fernandez), although he's in New York now, also with Benj (Pangilinan). I also play with Andoy (Andrew Muhlach)," he added.

Andres has gotten used to the attention he has been getting whenever he's outside. Just recently, he attended the wake of entertainment columnist Ethel Ramos, who was the talent manager of his dad.

"Ang daming cameras all over. Have you seen it? But I guess gano'n talaga."

He is aware that his mom Charlene previously hosted a dancing show, saying: "I think I got my grooves from her and also a little bit from my dad. I learned how

to dance from them."

Told that he is a "Crush ng Bayan," Andres simply smiled sheepishly.



...and with mom Charlene Gonzalez also during a family trip overseas.

klieg lights. "Honestly, I never really saw my parents as showbiz talaga," he said. "We grew up properly in Batangas. I just saw them as my parents, as regular people."

Filipinos spreadingPro-China News

Instead of concentrating on the aggressive actions of China, they are diverting it to Vietnam

MANILA, Philippines — The Chinese government could be involved in a disinformation campaign downplaying the aggression of Chinese vessels in the West Philippine Sea, the Philippine Coast Guard told senators.

Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) spokesperson Jay Tarriela said during a Senate joint

inquiry that the “information operation” the PCG has observed regarding the WPS “will not be happening unless it’s supported by a state actor.”

Tarriela shared this in response to a question by Sen. Risa Hontiveros on whether the PCG, based on its intelligence operations, has found evidence that those spreading dis-

information are part of a Chinese state-sponsored campaign.

The spokesperson said that the PCG has only obtained information through the journalists who notify them of possible disinformation campaigns on the WPS through the emails they receive.

“The only information that we have received is through (our) media friends, wherein those journalists we



This photo taken on April 23, 2023 shows a member of the Philippine coast guard vessel BRP Malabrigo manning his post while being shadowed by a Chinese coast guard ship at Second Thomas Shoal in the Spratly Islands in the disputed South China Sea.

know... receive emails trying to divert the attention of Filipinos. Instead of concentrating on the aggressive actions of China, they are diverting it to Vietnam,” Tarriela added.

“For the PCG that’s the only information we have,” the PCG spokesperson added.

To recall, Tarriela warned Filipinos in August against online peddlers of disinformation on the WPS. He described these sources of disinformation as “mouthpieces of the Chinese government” and believed they were causing confusion among Filipinos about the situation at the WPS.

Before that, Tarriela said that all those who make excuses for China’s aggressive behavior in the tense waterways are “unpatriotic” and “traitor” to the country.

Tarriela’s fiery statement was referring to the incident when Chinese vessels fired water cannons at Philippine vessels on their way to a resupply mission in Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal last August 5.

During the Senate’s joint inquiry, Hontiveros stressed in her opening statement that the P10 million intelligence funds given to the PCG every year since 2009 are “too little” given that the PCG defends the country against a much larger nation.

Currently, a significant portion of the PCG’s intelligence work relies on humint or human intelligence, Hontiveros said.

However, given the magnitude and scope of the Coast Guard’s role in maritime governance, it is necessary to augment this with sigint or signals intelligence, the senator added.

“If there are civilian agencies whose mandate doesn’t involve responding to our national security issues but still receive confidential and intel funds, why isn’t the Coast Guard receiving more? Shouldn’t they be given a larger share of confidential and intel funds? Isn’t this common sense?” Hontiveros said in Filipino.

Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri recently vowed to augment the confidential and intelligence funds of the PCG and the Philippine Navy to provide them “full logistical and operational support” in fending off maritime aggression.



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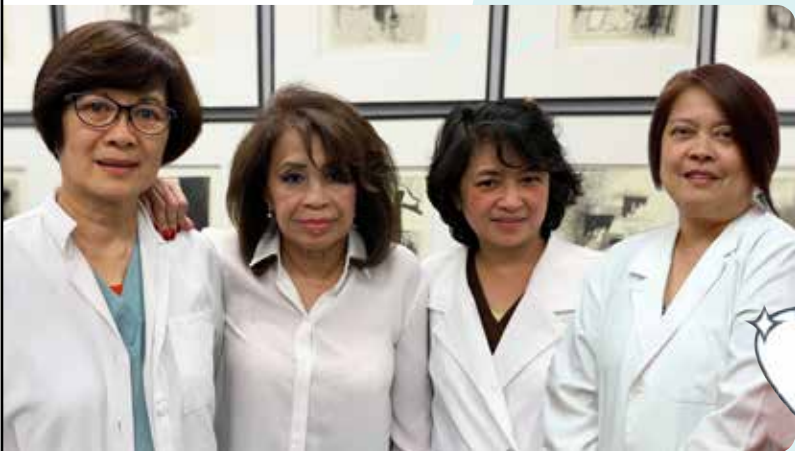
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