

School reopening raises concerns

Schools across the country need to reopen but it is not clear if they will be the center of the second wave of infections. Most experts opinions indicate that it is not a question of whether or not there will be a second wave as it is part of the nature of pandemics that there is always a second, or third wave but the only question is when and where that will be happening.

Parents and teachers are worried about the risks of reopening schools for a variety of reasons but most of all they are not clear how things will work out in the implementation of the safety procedures.

With schools preparing to welcome back students and return to in-class learning for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March, parents across the country have been concerned about the level of infection control precautions school boards will have in place.

With the start of school just days away in Quebec, teachers and other education workers around the province say the school system is still not prepared to resume in-class



People attend a rally pertaining to concerns around the reopening of schools amid COVID-19, held at the Saskatchewan Legislative Building in Regina on Aug. 7, 2020. BRANDON HARDER teaching amid the threat of COVID-19.

Nearly 2,000 teachers, principals and other education workers in public schools filled out an email questionnaire circulated last week by CBC Montreal and Radio-Canada.

Their responses indicate deep-seated concerns about their personal safety, high levels of anxiety, confusion about government guidelines and widespread dissatisfaction with Quebec Education Minister Jean-

François Roberge. Nearly 85 per cent of those who completed the questionnaire said it will be either "somewhat difficult" or "very difficult" to ensure public-health guidelines are respected when classes resume in the coming days.

All provinces have released their reopening plans that cover how students will enter schools, when masks will need to be worn, and what will happen if a student tests positive for COVID-19.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Schools were originally scheduled for August 28, but it was moved later to September 10.

As part of the initial plan, students would be divided into "learning groups" of 60 students for elementary-aged children and groups of 120 for high school students.

These groups are not the class sizes, but rather the size of the groups students can interact with, which the government says will reduce the risk of transmission among students, while improving contact tracing in the event of an outbreak.

See Page 7 Reopening schools

Biden picks former Montrealer Kamala Harris as choice for vice-president

Harris spent a good portion of her early life in Montreal and graduated from Westmount High in 1981 before returning to the U.S.

:FREDERIC TOMESCO

Aug 12, 2020 (Montreal Gazette)

Could a former Montrealer be on her way to the White House?

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden selected California Senator Kamala Harris on Tuesday as his choice for U.S. vice-president in the Nov. 3 election. Harris, 55, is a former San Francisco district attorney and California attorney

general.

The news did not go unnoticed in Montreal, where Harris spent a chunk of her early life. Mayor Valérie Plante offered her congratulations in a tweet, underlining Harris's status as the first Black woman in U.S. history to be on a major party presidential ticket.

Born in Oakland, Calif., Harris moved here with her sister and mother at age 12, graduating from Westmount High School in 1981 before returning to the U.S. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan

See Page 19 Kamala Harris



Presumptive Democratic presidential nominee and former vice-president Joe Biden has announced Senator Kamala Harris as his vice-presidential running mate in the 2020 election. They are seen in a July 2019 file photo. PHOTO BY SCOTT OLSON /Getty Images

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From the Publisher's desk

Will schools be the center for the second wave of a Covid 19 pandemic?

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

It is a frightening thought that a return to school evokes stress and anxiety over the risks of the corona virus infections among students and teaching staff. But closing schools for a longer period is not the ideal situation for it has a negative impact on students' education. Measures to diminish infections in schools have been planned with the guidance of health authorities. However, it is not clear whether or not they are sufficient to diminish the risks of a second wave of the virus infection. Two parents in British Columbia filed a suit against the Education Department for they worry that teachers and students are like "guinea pigs" in this reopening of schools. They want to stop the provincial government from reopening kindergarten to Grade 12 classes unless tougher COVID-19 safety measures are imposed.

The action lists alleged "failures" in the back-to-school plan, including the failure to impose mandatory face masks, implement physical distancing, reduce class sizes and provide all students with the option of virtual learning.

The suit labels the current plan — to allow the full-time return of nearly all of B.C.'s 591,000 elementary and secondary school students on Sept. 10 — "nonsensical," "unconscionable" and "not only endangers the lives of students and teachers, but also that of the

broader community."

The application seeks an immediate injunction to restrain the B.C. ministries of health and education from reopening schools, and calls for a judicial review of the government's plan.

Similarly, in Quebec, parents and teachers are very concerned that the government's plans are not sufficient to protect them. No one has filed a suit but a protest rally at the Education Department was held recently to call attention to the shortcomings of the measures planned. The participants at this rally pointed out that the schools would have been opened for two weeks before the school service centers introduce their emergency measures by September 15. Moreover, they are being asked to do a lot with less resources. Besides doing the extra work of cleaning, sanitizing, they are also required to do catch up work for the time the students missed classes as well as to provide on line learning for those who are unable to come to school. There is also an additional load to take care of students with special needs.

The safety measures look great on paper but the practicality of implementing them is questionable. With the shortage of teachers, class sizes are too large to keep social distancing possible. Furthermore, Bill 21 that prohibits public service workers

from wearing a religious symbol has discouraged some people from joining the teaching profession. Now, due to the risks of Covid 19 to older teachers, they have opted to retire early. It is therefore obvious that the chronic shortage of teachers shall be with us for some time. It takes four years to have a student graduate from a university course. It is not like the PAB or personal support workers program that can be abbreviated in a few months which is currently being done to fill up the shortage of personnel in long term care institutions in Quebec

We cannot emphasize enough that returning to school should be a concern for all. If things go out of hand, the whole community will be affected. but it is important for all students to receive proper education.

"Could the return to school result in the start of a second wave?" This question was asked in an interview of a health professional, Dr. Simon of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, who answered: "What we have seen from experience in other countries where schools have either remained open or reopened is that that process of school reopening hasn't typically resulted in a significant increase in community transmission or second wave.

So, school reopening really needs to be seen in the context of all the other things we are doing as a society, all the other ways in which we are interacting.

If we continue to take precautions, both within school and out of school, then hopefully, we will decrease the chance of seeing a community-wide recurrence."

Hopefully is what we can say at this point because no one really knows how much control we have over a virus that has caused so much destruction in the economy and loss of lives. It seems that we may be able to avoid a second wave if all the measures planned for our safety are followed diligently.

-oOo-



Marvin Rotrand
City Councillor, Snowdon

Dear Friend,

Valerie Plante has launched a consultation as to some ideas in regard to the 2021 budget.

The survey has been criticized in the media as slanted and not credible - anyone can fill it out multiple times, etc. and the choices given reflect what the City wants rather than a broader array of choices that citizens might want.

An example is in terms of priorities do you want more active transit (bicycle paths) or more composting ?

Ideas that aren't championed by the City such as economic development, etc. aren't mentioned.

Given that the City is demanding major changes in how it operates, including the power to run a deficit, the survey should be more professional and better controlled if it is to have any real value.

You can judge for yourself. The link to the survey is below:

<https://montreal.ca/actualites/consultation-prebudgetaire-participez-lelaboration-du-budget-2021>

But that isn't why I am writing today. You may notice in clicking on the link that the survey is in French only. I find that appalling.

The law does not prevent the City from providing services or information in English. In fact, the municipal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities specifically mentions services in English as a responsibility of the municipality.

The City has always published budgetary information before. It is more than disappointing that this survey which is simple and inexpensive to translate is offered in French only.

In fact, it seems to be part of a pattern. Less information now seems to be appearing in English.

When Mayor Plante decided to close the police station in the NDG neighbourhood - with no consultation - the original document for the "information" session that was held after the fact was in French only. The neighbourhood is largely English speaking.

It was only a major public uproar that saw the document translated the week before the meeting in which the public was told that the police station would close no matter what anyone had to say about it.

But I find the refusal to provide an English version of a budget survey particularly egregious. Given how easy it is to have an English version, I have to believe that it was a conscious decision.

Attached is my letter sent earlier this week to Benoit Dorais, the President of the Executive Committee, saying in no uncertain terms that the City is doing a major disservice to a large part of its population.

Realistically, I don't believe Plante and Dorais will accede to my reasonable request. The solution will need to be political. Montreal needs a new, more responsive and more respectful administration.

Montrealers head to the polls for a municipal election in November 2021. Issues such as the lack of respect to the English-speaking population in Montreal should be a motivation for us to change the administration but there are so many more reasons to do so as well.

In the months to come, I will be providing regular updates as to how a strong and competent team will be put forward that you will be proud to support.

In the meantime, we should as a community let Plante know that we don't accept being ignored in our own city.

Yours truly,

Marvin Rotrand
City Councillor - Snowdon

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Quebec announces plan to deal with second wave of COVID-19, avoid fatal failures of the spring

Plan includes more than \$100M in additional funding for public health authorities

Jonathan Montpetit · CBC News · Posted: Aug 18, 2020



Health Minister Christian Dubé outlined Tuesday a nine-point plan aimed at strengthening various points of the health-care system. (Jacques Boissinot/The Canadian Press)

The Quebec government is giving its beleaguered health-care system six weeks to fix the problems that caused the novel coronavirus to spread throughout the province this spring, killing nearly 6,000 people in its wake.

Health Minister Christian Dubé revealed an ambitious series of reforms on Tuesday that he wants to see in place by Sept. 30. They range from faster testing to new staffing procedures, from better infection control to more accountable managers.

Dubé also announced \$106 million in additional funding for regional public health authorities to hire 1,000 full-time employees to conduct contact tracing.

"We learned a lot of from the first wave," Dubé said at a news conference in Quebec City. "We drew lessons from the things we did well, and not so well."

Quebec — and Montreal in particular — was the epicentre of the

COVID-19 outbreak in Canada between March and June. The province averaged nearly 1,000 new cases per day in early May and registered hundreds of deaths every week.

The vast majority of the deaths were residents of long-term care homes — known in French as CHSLDs — or private seniors' residences (RPAs).

It's believed the infections were often spread by staff who, at the outset of the pandemic, were forced to work at multiple locations because of severe personnel shortages.

Hospitalizations and death have declined steadily since June, and government officials have spent the summer months trying to identify what exactly went wrong in the spring.

On Tuesday, Dubé and the minister responsible for seniors and informal caregivers, Marguerite Blais, blamed a host of pre-existing issues for the health-care system's inability to respond effectively to the crisis.

Both said long-standing staffing shortages in CHSLDs were a problem before their party, the Coalition Avenir Québec, took power in 2018.

Blais, who was seniors minister under the Liberals as well, said past budget cuts meant long-term homes were short on infection-control resources.

And Dubé said past reforms by the Liberals left CHSLDs without accountable managers.

A central element of his second-wave plan is bringing an end to the practice of patient attendants working in different long-term care homes or on different floors, in order to reduce cross-contamination.

The second wave is coming. Here's what public health experts say we should expect

"Let me be clear: there will be no mobility [of staff]," Dubé said. "Health-

care managers who don't follow the rules will face consequences."

The province is in the process of rushing 10,000 new attendants through

medical supplies, including N95 masks and surgical gloves, and identifying local manufacturers for other medical equipment.



This summer, around 10,000 people have been going through an abbreviated training program to become a patient attendant in Quebec. (Paul Chiasson/The Canadian Press)

an abbreviated training program. Dubé said that should be sufficient to solve the staffing shortage issue.

Another important element of the plan is to ensure each CHSLD in the province has an accountable manager, who will be responsible for overseeing infection control as well as staffing.

Other elements of Dubé's second-wave plan include:

- Procedures to ensure vulnerable populations, such as homeless people and at-risk youth, can still access health and social services during a second-wave of infections.

- Hospitals being asked to avoid cancelling elective surgeries and other important medical procedures. Thousands of procedures were cancelled in the spring in order to free up hospital space that, in the end, wasn't needed.

- Increasing strategic reserves of

There will be a second wave

Though Quebec saw an increase in reported cases at the start of July as it lifted several lockdown measures, infection rates have dropped in recent weeks. The province is now averaging fewer than 100 new cases per day.

But with schools set to reopen at full capacity starting next week, and colder weather on the way, Dubé sought to prepare Quebecers for what to expect in the fall.

"There will be a second wave. I'm saying that because I wouldn't want people to be disappointed when there are outbreaks in a hospital, a CHSLD or even in a school," he said.

But this time, he added, "the health-care system will be able to respond more rapidly." ##

Erin O'Toole wins Conservative leadership race, reaches out to broaden blue tent



Erin O'Toole on the stage with his family and Andrew Scheer cheering for his victory on Monday night (Photo: Washington Post)

Erin O'Toole has won the leadership for the Conservative Party, promising to present a vision to make Canada more prosperous and reaching out to broaden the party's base of supporters.

After a six-hour delay due to glitches with the ballots, O'Toole took 57

per cent of the votes on the third and final ballot, compared to 43 per cent for second-place contender Peter MacKay.

O'Toole claimed victory after taking support from Leslyn Lewis, who finished with a surprisingly strong performance but dropped off on the second ballot. Derek Sloan dropped off

after the first ballot.

In his acceptance speech, O'Toole promised to work to unite the party, champion Conservative values, and hold Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to account.

"We must continue to point out Liberal failings and corruption, but we must also show Canadians our vision for a stronger, more prosperous and more united Canada," he said.

"Canada can and must do better and Conservatives will work hard to earn the trust and confidence of Canadians in the next election."

Acknowledging the party needs to broaden its base to win the next election, O'Toole reached out to all

Canadians in all regions of the country and from diverse backgrounds.

"I believe that whether you are Black, white, brown or from any race or creed, whether you are LGBT or straight, whether you are an Indigenous Canadian or have joined the Canadian family three weeks ago or three generations ago," he said.

"Whether you're doing well or barely getting by. Whether you worship on Friday, Saturday, Sunday or not at all ... you are an important part of Canada and you have a home in the Conservative Party of Canada." (Condensed for space)

Kathleen Harris · CBC News · Posted: Aug 23, 2020



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New temporary public policy will allow visitors to apply for a work permit without having to leave Canada

Change intended to benefit employers who are still facing difficulties finding workers

August 24, 2020—Ottawa—Visitors who are currently in Canada and have a valid job offer will be able to apply for an employer-specific work permit and, if approved, receive the permit without having to leave the country, thanks to a new public policy announced today by the Honourable Marco E.L. Mendicino, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

This temporary policy change takes effect immediately and will benefit employers in Canada who continue to face difficulties finding the workers they need, as well as temporary residents who would like to contribute their labour and skills to Canada's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the pandemic, temporary residents who remained in Canada were encouraged to maintain valid legal status. With air travel limited around the world, some visitors to Canada have been unable to leave, while some foreign workers had to change their status to visitor because their work permit was expiring and

they didn't have a job offer to be able to apply for a new work permit. Some employers in Canada have also faced ongoing labour and skills shortages throughout this period, including those who provide important goods and services that Canadians rely on.

To be eligible, an applicant looking to benefit from this temporary public policy must have valid status in Canada as a visitor on August 24, 2020 and remain in Canada have a job offer submit an application for an employer-specific work permit that is supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) or an LMIA-exempt offer of employment, no later than March 31, 2021, meet all other standard admissibility criteria

This temporary public policy also provides the opportunity for applicants who meet these criteria and who had a valid work permit in the past 12 months to begin working for their new employer before their work permit application has been fully approved. To do so, they need to follow the instructions for the process described here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigrationrefugeecitizenship/services/work-canada/permit/temporary/after-apply-next-steps.html#visitors>

Quote

"We have heard from employers who continue to face challenges recruiting and hiring the workers they need during the pandemic. At the same time, some visitors in Canada may be able to contribute their skills where there are labour shortages. The measures introduced today will now allow visitors to apply for work permits without having to leave the country first. This exemption from the normal temporary work permit requirements is aimed at removing barriers to create a more agile workforce that leverages visitors with the skills and experience to accelerate our economic recovery."

—The Honourable Marco E.L. Mendicino, P.C., M.P., Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Quick facts

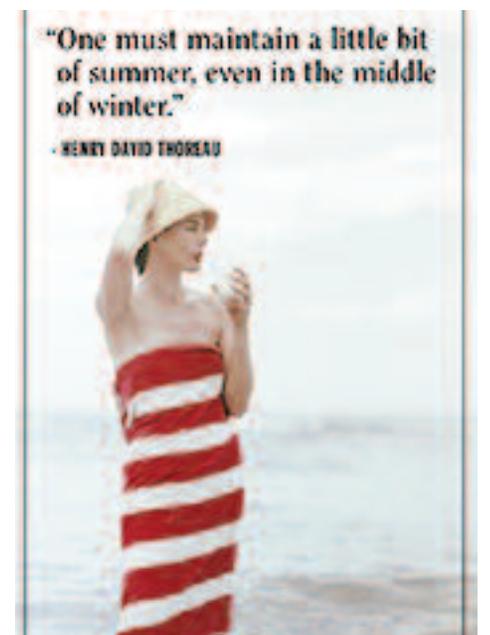
- Any type of visitor who meets the criteria is eligible to apply under this new public policy, including super visa holders, business visitors and those who entered Canada through a Global Skills Strategy work permit exemption.

- Foreign nationals who arrive in Canada as visitors after August 24, 2020, are not eligible under the public policy.

- Prior to this temporary policy change, a person applying as a temporary resident would usually need to apply for their initial work permit before they came to Canada. If they were already in Canada with visitor status when they were approved for a work permit, they would need to leave Canada and return before their work permit was issued to them.

Associated links

- How COVID-19 is affecting IRCC: Foreign workers
- Process for public policy applicants who have had a work permit in the past 12 months
- News release: Government announces help for employers to meet their labour needs



Thoughtful, innovative': B.C. education minister endorses finalized back-to-school plans from 60 districts

B.C. students are set to head back to class on Sept. 10

Roshini Nair · CBC News · Posted: Aug 26, 2020 5:00 AM PT | Last

Education Minister Rob Fleming said Wednesday he was impressed by the "thoughtful, innovative approach" taken by the province's 60 school districts in crafting their pandemic-ready back-to-school plans.

Across the province, students can expect a gradual restart of classes beginning Sept. 10, with measures in place to prevent widespread COVID-19 transmission.

Wednesday marked the deadline for all 60 school districts in B.C. to have their return-to-school plans available to parents. Each district should have its local plan posted online.

"There are consequences for children who are not in school for a prolonged period of time," said Fleming, saying it was extremely important to get students back into a school setting.

"Education is a must for all children ... and it must be delivered in the best and safest way possible," he said.

Fleming's update comes as parents and teachers are expressing their anxieties about sending children back to school during the pandemic. The B.C. Teachers' Federation has called for smaller class sizes and stricter face mask regulations to

protect children and adults from COVID-19.

"We are going to remain flexible," said Fleming, adding many districts were adding options that weren't conceivable a few months ago. **Plans reflect each district's needs, minister says**

At the centre of the province's guidelines, released July 29, is a plan to place students in learning groups of 60-120 children that will allow for social interaction while limiting potential exposure to the novel coronavirus and simplifying the process of contact tracing.

One of these cohorts could include, for example, two elementary school homeroom classes that eat lunch together and share recess time, or a group of high school students who are taking the same classes.

Face masks will be required in high-traffic areas like hallways and on buses but not in classrooms.

Rob Fleming says schools are more secure and controlled than public spaces like shopping malls. Each district's plan follows these core principles, but the details of each plan will depend on the student population, the type of building/facilities available and course offerings.

"It will look different in different parts of the province. It always does. That's the great diversity of education in B.C.," said Fleming.

"All districts will have funding secured and funding flexibility to be



B.C. Education Minister Rob Fleming (cbc.ca)

able to continue to serve up communities."

Fleming says all elementary and middle schools will have access to full-time in-class instruction in accordance with public health measures. Secondary schools with larger populations will offer a blend of in-class and remote learning.

The vast majority of school districts are moving to a quarterly system, where student are taught two courses per quarter, to offer the most student choice and reduce physical contact between staff and students. Some school districts, however, are moving to an eight-course system — where there is one course taught every five weeks.

Some school districts released plan details early

Recent days had already seen a number of school districts roll out their plans for September.

B.C.'s largest school district, Surrey, offered a sneak peek last week at its plans for students in Grade 8 and

A physical distancing sign is pictured in the hallway of Bridgeview Elementary in Surrey, British Columbia on Wednesday, August 26, 2020. (Ben Nelms/CBC)

Secondary students in grades 10-12 will only have 30 peers in their cohort, while students in grades eight and nine will have 60.

The school year will run on a quarterly system. Each day will be broken into two blocks, with secondary students spending one block in the classroom and the other primarily online and children in grades eight and nine spending both blocks in class.

District superintendent Jordan Tinney has said the main focus of Surrey's plan is to keep those cohort sizes as small as possible.

With files from Bethany Lindsay

Important new measures on post-graduation work permit eligibility for students beginning programs online

Ottawa, August 26, 2020— Many prospective international students who would like to study in Canada this fall are facing uncertainty due to travel restrictions. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada recognizes this, and will continue to ensure that Canada's immigration programs are flexible to respond to these uncertainties with 3 new measures on post-graduation work permit eligibility for students beginning programs online.

These changes are being implemented to provide more flexibility on eligibility rules for the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program for students who need or want to start their Canadian study program online from abroad.

Three changes are being introduced:

Students may now study online from abroad until April 30, 2021, with no time deducted from the length of a future post-graduation work permit, provided 50% of their program of study is eventually completed in Canada.

Students who have enrolled in a program that is between 8 and 12 months in length, with a start date from May to September 2020, will be able to complete their entire program online from abroad and still be eligible for a post-graduation work permit.

Students who have enrolled in a

program with a start date from May to September 2020 and study online up to April 30, 2021, and who graduate from more than one eligible program of study, may be able to combine the length of their programs of study when they apply for a post-graduation work permit in the future, as long as 50% of their total studies are completed in Canada.

To be eligible for these measures, students must have submitted a study permit application before starting a program of study in the spring, summer, or fall 2020 semester, or the January 2021 semester. All students must eventually be approved for a study permit.

The easing of COVID-19 related restrictions will depend on the progress made in Canada and around the world in containing the spread of the coronavirus. IRCC will continue to closely monitor the situation and assess whether further changes are needed.

Facilitative measures to support international students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic From: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Background

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has made a number of temporary policy changes intended to support international

students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

Applying for a study permit

Students who have submitted a complete application will receive priority processing and will be ready to travel to Canada soon after travel restrictions are modified.

IRCC has introduced 2-stage study permit processing for students who can't submit a complete application. This includes a first-stage eligibility assessment and a final decision based on admissibility requirements in the second stage.

This allows applicants who have been unable to provide biometrics, police certificates or the results of an immigration medical examination to get an initial assessment. If approved, they can feel reassured that they have already met most of the criteria for a study permit.

IRCC aims to process all first-stage eligibility assessments before the start of the fall semester. When a student is approved through both stages, they will be ready to travel to Canada once travel restrictions are modified.

Eligibility for the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program

Students can study online from abroad until April 30, 2021, without affecting their eligibility or the

length of a future post-graduation work permit, provided they are able to complete at least 50% of their program in Canada.

Students enrolled in programs between 8 and 12 months in length that started during the spring, summer or fall terms (from May to September) of 2020 will be able to apply for a post-graduation work permit if they complete their entire program outside of Canada.

Students enrolled in a program with a start date from May to September 2020 who study online up to April 30, 2021, and who graduate from more than one eligible program of study, may be able to combine the length of their programs of study when they apply for a post-graduation work permit in the future, as long as 50% of their total studies are completed in Canada.

Students already in Canada

Students in Canada in the winter, spring and summer terms who were forced to study online, reduce their studies to part-time, or take a break from their studies completely, as a result of restrictions on classroom learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, are allowed to continue working on- or off-campus if their study

See Page 13 Eligibility

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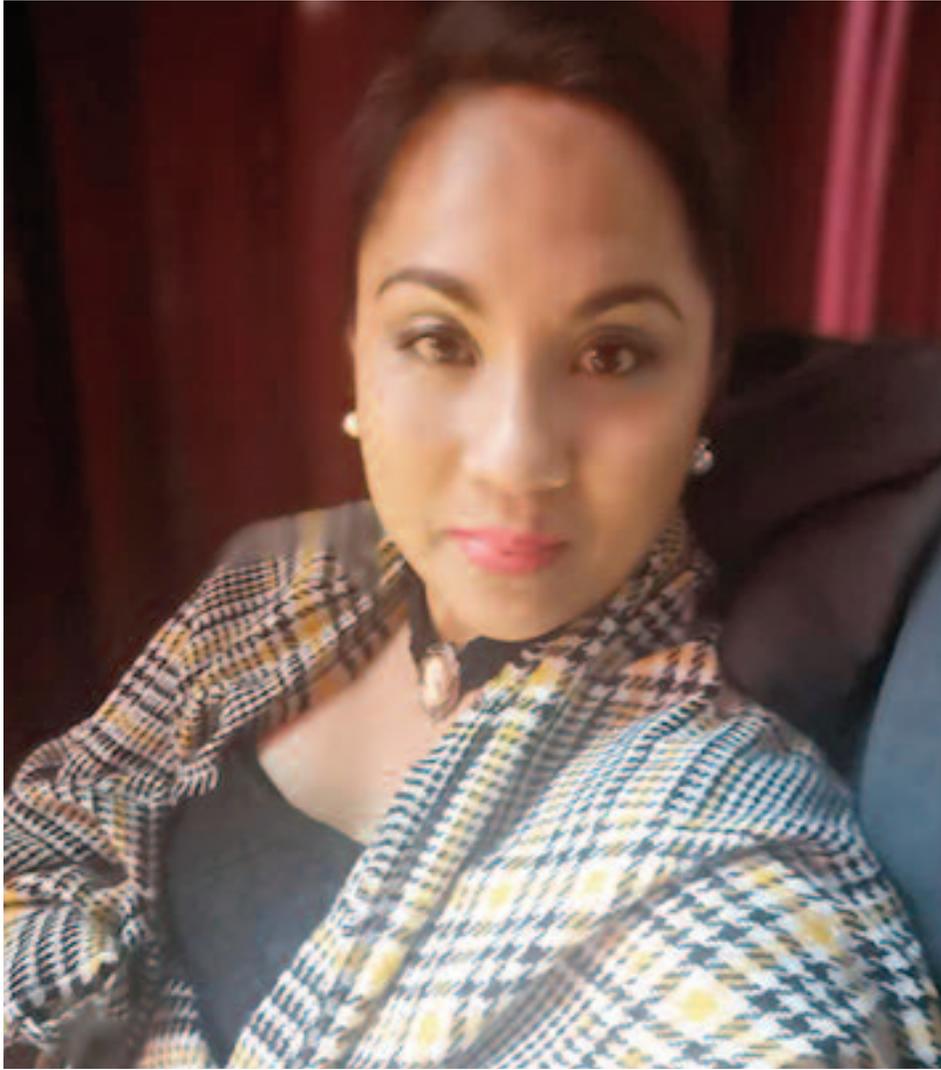
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PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

By Fely Rosales-Cariño



Michelle Vargas Lao

Young, beautiful, and charismatic are words that easily apply to Michelle Vargas Lao, our Personality of the Month. Seemingly born with vigor and vivacity, she's a natural

community asset. She's also blessed with a very kind heart. At the end of one of her concerts, she waited patiently with me for my lift to arrive, though the venue has long been

emptied. She said she does not want to leave me alone waiting in the dark. I will remember this class act for a very long time!

Michelle is in her prime, enjoying her life to the hilt. She pours out her heart in her music. A songwriter and a performing artist, she sings and dances during her concerts. Also a music teacher, she gives free voice lessons for people whose ages range from 7 to 77 years old. Clearly passionate about music, she started singing at a very young age. She can switch genres, singing pops to ballads with considerable ease. The word multitasking fits Michelle very well. Why, she is also a choreographer, no small feat! Often invited to perform, she's no stranger to audiences of the highest standard. Music aficionados would consider her a master performer.

All of these attributes have catapulted her to the Presidency of the Filipino Canadian Artist Association of Quebec (FCAAQ). Because of her popularity and immense talent, she is often invited to attend or perform at Filipino functions. She was once invited by the Philippine Ambassador Petronila Garcia to attend the opening of the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa. She was in awe at the huge space, the neatness and the hospitality of the staff embassy. One has to visit our embassy in Ottawa to see how nice it is. As one observer said, "To see is to believe." Michelle said "I am proud of our Philippine Embassy in Ottawa; everyone should visit the building."

Michelle can boast of an impressive resume. She created and manages the Michelle Vargas Lao (MVL) services, which includes the

management of the Immigration and Integration Inc. She also served as a former administrative assistant of Concordia University. She studied Regulated Canadian Immigration at La Salle College, Montreal. She earned a Bachelor of Commerce, Marketing at John Molson School of Business, and Bachelor of Business Management at Concordia College in Manila, Philippines. She also attended Jose Rizal University.

In spite of her busy working hours, Michelle somehow finds time to accommodate community events as a guest performer. A few of these are: the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM) in June 2020, Pista Sa Nasyon, the Bayanihan Spirit (Tulungan), Filipino Canadian Association of West Island (FCAWI) Independence Ball in Olympia Hall, Dollard des Ormeaux, Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs (FAMAS) Independence Ball in Holiday Inn, Cote-De-Liesse, Seniors of West Island and Suburbs (SWIS) Independence Ball at Olympia Hall, DDO, Filipino Heritage Day Picnic in Olympia Park, Pincourt, Quebec, Panday Tinig of Montreal performance at Oscar Peterson Hall, Montreal.

What do people say about Michelle? They acknowledge this powerful performer. They admire her friendliness and civic mindedness. This explosive dynamite fully deserves the accolades that come her way. Kudos, Michelle! This is my prayer for you: May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you, may the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace (Numbers 6: 24-26).

PIDC Mabuhay Philippines Festival 2020: A Historic and Successful Virtual Event

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT-Retired

The Philippine Independence Day Council-PIDC holds a very successful first-ever online show, "Mabuhay Philippines Virtual Festival 2020". PIDC, a 22-year-old quintessential non-profit composite organization in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario has organized and presented the big Filipino culture-focused event over 2 days on August 22 and 23, 2020 via its Facebook page and Website. With the theme "Pamana" or heritage, the summer project was in honour and grateful recognition of all Filipino health front liners and essential workers across the globe.

Superbly hosted by Melissa Grelo, a CTV television personality and "The Social" show host with Cristina Carpio, Brand Strategist and Editor-in-Chief of Marquee Magazine, as co-host and Event Director. The 9-hour marathon presentation has showcased wonderfully the best and the brightest of talents and stars in the Filipino-Canadian community including the home country's Philippine cultural troupes. Presented by TD Canada Trust, the virtual event was also sponsored by TFC-The Filipino Channel, Agnes Pasaporte Miranda of WFG-World Financial Group, Imperial World Inc. and partnered by CTV Media. Other



supporters were the Family Dentistry of Dr. Victoria Santiago-Liu, Mel Galeon's FV Foods, Saladmaster, MegaWorld, UMAC, Barrio Fiesta Overlea, AFCA, ABC Accountants, and Max's Restaurant & Paper Crane.

The 11:00 am - 8:00 pm. EST simulated video activity highlighted several interesting, informative and entertaining segments. Among which were congratulatory messages delivered virtually in person by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Philippine Ambassador Petronila Garcia, Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Philippine Consul General Orontes Castro, Toronto Mayor John Tory, MP Michael Levitt, MPF Chairman Norma Carpio, MPF Co-chair Agnes Pasaporte Miranda and PIDC President Ramon Estaris.

Interviews with Federal Minister of Immigration, Refugee & Citizenship

Marco Mendicino, Minister of Children, Family & Social Development Ahmed Hussen, Grammy Award Winner Jhett Tolentino and Gawad Kalinga President Pidoy Pacis were undertaken by the hosts and a panel of interviewers composed of PIDC community leaders. The fashion show presented designs by renowned Filipino couturiers Renee Salud, Francis Libiran, Kenneth Barlis, Shanon Pamaong, Jaki Penalosa, and Ditta Sandico with great performances of Ma-Anne Dionisio, Martha Joy, Emilio Zarris & Belinda Corpuz in the Fashion Show segment. Special appearances were made by Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray, Movie-TV actor Sam Milby, Miss International 2013 Bea Rose Santiago and Ms. Joey Albert.

Performing awesome entertainment and musical numbers during the show were popular Philippine

and Canadian-based cultural & dance groups, with MonTorralba as the musical director. Individual presentations were amazingly rendered by known Filipino-Canadian professional and amateur singers, dancers and performers and PIDC beauty pageant winners. Brief messages also were delivered by several community leaders and celebrities.

Among the festival organizers and community leaders who spearheaded the pioneering project were Norma Carpio, Agnes Pasaporte Miranda and Ramon Estaris, PIDC President who were ably assisted by hardworking PIDC Executive Officers, and Board of Directors.

With more than 18,000 viewers and still "liking", the "online attendees" have posted their highly "discriminating verdicts" saying that the event was indeed a trail-blazing and incomparable centrepiece of Filipino heritage, culture and tradition in virtual images.



Filipino-Canadians bid farewell to the Philippine Ambassador Petronila Garcia via a Virtual Despedida



Petronila Garcia
(Photo: Phil.Canadian Enquirer)

August 25, 2020, Ottawa – Filipinos throughout Eastern Canada gathered today for two unprecedented farewell events held in honor of outgoing Philippine Ambassador Petronila P. Garcia.

In the first event, members of different Filipino community organizations in Ottawa, ON, Montreal, QC, Fredricton, NB, Halifax, NS, and Summerside, PEI, congregated online in a despedida for the Ambassador hosted by the Embassy of the Philippines in Canada.

During the virtual farewell, representatives from the various organizations delivered heartfelt messages for the Ambassador, thanking her for her dedicated service and her efforts to reach out to the Filipino diaspora throughout the country. Some of the participants also thanked her for always highlighting



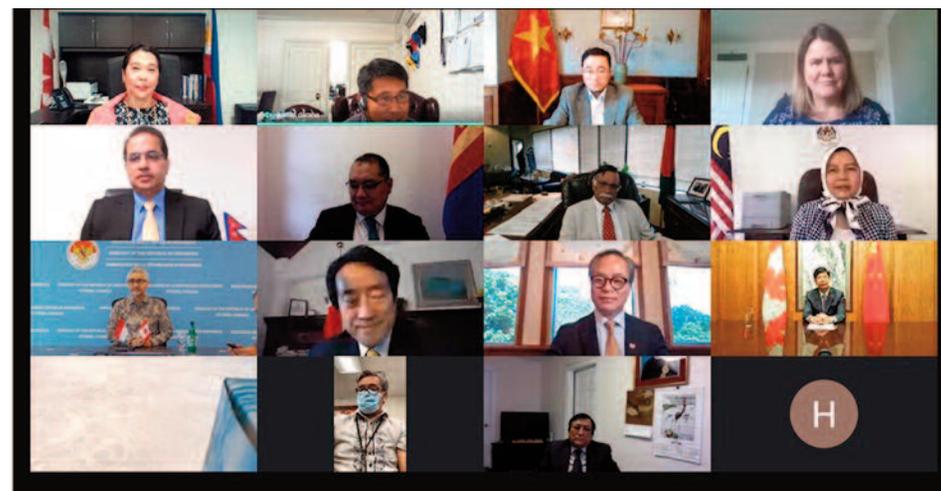
Some of the participants from community organizations from Eastern Canada are shown above.

Filipino culture and the arts while others expressed their appreciation for the consular outreach missions held by the Philippine Embassy in their provinces every year.

A second farewell event was hosted online by Mrs. Rosemer Enverga on the same day. The event was attended by religious, cultural, and civic-oriented Filipino organiza-

tions in the Greater Toronto Area, as well as Senator Yonah Martin, Member of Parliament Nelly Shin, and Member of Provincial Parliament Vijay Thanigasalam. Interspersed between the various messages for the Ambassador were musical performances by Ron Michael Adea and diva Lilac Cana.

Ambassador Garcia thanked the participants during the two events and expressed how touched she was by their messages. She recalled the many developments that have taken place during her six-year tenure and the projects that the Philippine Embassy completed in collaboration with the various Filipino organizations. She credited the positive image of Filipinos in Canada to the hard work and achievements of the Filipino community. She enjoined all attendees to continue to extend the same support for the Philippine Embassy and the next Ambassador.



The Heads of Missions of the Asia Pacific Group of Ambassadors and High Commissioners bid farewell to Ambassador Garcia as the latter ends her tour of duty and turns over the Deanship to Brunei High Commissioner Pg Kamal Bashah Pg Ahmand (top, second from left)



The Philippine Embassy relocated to its own building - July 1, 2016 30 Murray St., Ottawa K1N 5M4

From Page 1 Reopening schools

Every student and staff member will be given two masks upon returning to school. Masks will be mandatory for middle school and high school students in situations where physical distancing is not possible, such as hallways and on buses.

Elementary school students are not required to wear a mask.

The provincial government is also spending \$45.6 million to help schools prepare for the upcoming school year, which will go towards increased cleaning expenses, hand-washing stations and additional supplies for students and teachers.

ALBERTA

Students in Alberta will head back to the classroom with full-time schedules in September, with a number of new health measures in place, including grouping students in cohorts to limit contact, staggering start times for classes, recesses and lunches, and daily COVID-19 screening questionnaires. Class sizes, however, will not be limited.

Staff and students in Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear masks in common areas and on school buses. The province will provide two reusable masks for each student, teacher and staff member in the province. Staff will also be given one face shield each to be used at their discretion. Hand sanitizer

and contactless thermometers will also be provided by the province.

Should an outbreak of COVID-19 occur, affected schools could move to partial in-class learning or at-home learning. Students with symptoms of COVID-19 will be required to get tested and only be allowed back into class after a negative result.

Education Minister Adriana LaGrange said parents won't be forced to send their kids to school if they don't feel it's safe. However, it would be up to the parents to work with the school to develop a plan for their child's at-home learning.

SASKATCHEWAN

In June, Saskatchewan announced that in-classroom learning will resume in the fall, releasing a set of guidelines to help school divisions prepare. But the bulk of the planning will fall to school divisions and school boards.

According to the provincial guidelines, staff, parents and students are encouraged to limit physical contact, but they note that physical distancing is "less practical" for younger students. Although the province says general use containers need to be available, students and staff are encouraged to have their own hand sanitizer on hand.

In a statement to CTV News, Regina Public Schools said it's looking at protective screens, water bottle fillers and even air purifying systems for the upcoming school year, but note that

distribution of these items will be tied to school enrolment and staff numbers.

Most school divisions in the province will require masks when schools reopen on Sept. 8. While there is no official mandate, the province said it was purchasing masks to distribute to schools in the event the chief medical officer deems them necessary.

MANITOBA

The Manitoba government announced on July 30 that elementary school students will be heading back to school full-time on Sept. 8, while high school students may be required to conduct online classes, depending on each school's ability to implement the necessary physical distancing regulations.

Each school must ensure students working remotely have access to the necessary technology.

Classrooms will be configured to support physical distancing, including the use of multi-purpose rooms, if needed. Where physical distancing requirements can't be met, students will be placed in cohorts.

Lunch breaks and recesses will be staggered and protocols will be implemented to reduce congestion in the hallways and common areas.

Masks will be mandatory for students in Grades 4 to 12. Originally, the province decided not to require masks in schools, but it later reversed its decision, with the premier citing "the input of literally thousands and

thousands of Manitobans."

ONTARIO

The Ontario government announced on July 30 that elementary school students and many high school students will return to the classroom full-time in September.

Elementary students will return to class five days a week for full days, which will include recess and lunch. Class sizes will not be restricted.

Students will see changes in the times for recess, lunch, and bathroom breaks, however.

While most high schools will reopen under the same stipulations, 24 school boards across the province will have classes capped at 15 students and will alternate days or schedules to ensure schools remain at 50 per cent capacity.

Non-medical masks will be mandatory for students from Grade 4 to Grade 12. Grade 3 students will be encouraged to wear a mask in common areas, though it is not required.

Teachers and school staff will be given medical masks.

Parents will be asked to self-screen students each day and to keep a child at home if they are experiencing any symptoms.

Some school boards have decided to go beyond the province's rules. The Toronto District School Board

See Page 8 Reopening schools



Paul Reville says COVID-19 school closures have turned a spotlight on inequities and other shortcomings

As we already know, school closures have affected us in different ways but more profoundly, they have revealed that more should be done to be better prepared for any crisis. As education has a pervasive effect on our life, it is important that our government adopts a policy to recognize its importance.

The following excerpts from an interview makes us realize that due to the reality of inequality in our society, our educational system must be re-designed to even out the disparities between the rich and the poor.

"The best that can come of this is a new paradigm shift in terms of the way in which we look at education, because children's well-being and success depend on more than just schooling. We need to look holistically, at the entirety of children's lives. In order for children to come to school ready to learn, they need a wide array of essential supports and opportunities outside of school. And we haven't done a very good job of providing these. These education prerequisites go far beyond the purview of school systems, but rather are the responsibility of communities and society at large. In order to learn, children need equal access to health care, food, clean water, stable housing, and out-of-school enrichment opportunities, to name just a few preconditions. We have to reconceptualize the whole job of child development and education, and construct systems that meet children where they are and give them what they need, both inside and outside of school, in order for all of them to have a genuine opportunity to be successful.

Within this coronavirus crisis there is an opportunity to reshape American education. The only precedent in our field was when the Sputnik went up in 1957, and suddenly, Americans became very worried that their educational system wasn't competitive with that of the Soviet



A former secretary of education for Massachusetts, Paul Reville is keenly aware of the financial and resource disparities between districts, schools, and individual students.

Union. We felt vulnerable, like our defenses were down, like a nation at risk. And we decided to dramatically boost the involvement of the federal government in schooling and to increase and improve our scientific curriculum. We decided to look at education as an important factor in human capital development in this country. Again, in 1983, the report "Nation at Risk" warned of a similar risk: Our education system wasn't up to the demands of a high-skills/high-knowledge economy.

We tried with our education reforms to build a 21st-century education system, but the results of that movement have been modest. We are still a nation at risk. We need another paradigm shift, where we look at our goals and aspirations for education, which are summed up in phrases like "No Child Left Behind," "Every Student Succeeds," and "All Means All," and figure out how to build a system that has the capacity to deliver on that promise of equity and excellence in education for all of our students, and all means all. We've got that opportunity now. I hope we don't fail to take advantage of it in a misguided rush to restore the status quo."

(Source: The Harvard Gazette)

From Page 7 Reopening schools

decided in August that it will require students from kindergarten to Grade 12 to wear masks at school where physical distancing cannot be maintained. The TDSB, which is Canada's largest school board, also said that it would use reserve funds to maintain varying classroom caps, including a max of 20 students in Grade 4-8 classes at schools in neighbourhoods with higher levels of COVID-19.

QUEBEC

With full-time classes set to resume in September, Quebec's plan includes dividing elementary and high school classes into "bubble groups" of up to six students who will not have to physically distance from each other.

These bubble groups will have to maintain a two-metre distance from other students and staff whenever possible. Teachers will move between classrooms based on the subject being taught, and students will remain in the same classroom.

Students in Grades 10 and 11 can choose to either form their own bubble and attend school full-time or use an alternating schedule, attending school at least every second day with the same class of students, while participating in at-home learning.

It's not yet clear whether entire "bubbles" of students would be sent home if one becomes sick, or if someone in the family of one of the students is sick.

The province announced Aug. 10 that face masks will be mandatory for all students in Grade 5 and up, including college and university students. The masks will need to be worn in hallways, amphitheatres, school buses and common areas, but not in the classroom or during outdoor recess.

Parents will be required to supply masks for their children, but teachers will have masks provided for them.

If a classroom or school is required to close due to a COVID-19 outbreak, students will still receive 15 hours of education per week online, including dedicated time with a teacher.

NEW BRUNSWICK

In New Brunswick, full-time learning will be mandatory, but will look different depending on a student's grade level.

Students from kindergarten to Grade 8 will attend school full-time in groups of up to 15. Those groups will attend class, socialize and enter the school together, maintaining distance from other groups.

High school students will be required to attend class a minimum of every other day, with reduced class sizes. The province is also providing financial support for students to purchase their own laptops to bring to class.

Masks are mandatory for students from Grades 6 to 12 when outside classrooms, and younger students are encouraged to wear masks as well.

NOVA SCOTIA

All students in Nova Scotia will return to school in September with increased health and safety protocols. Classrooms will also be reorganized to increase spacing, and classes will be treated as a bubble, to minimize contact with other students.

In-school assemblies and other

large gatherings will not be permitted. As well, cafeterias and school food programs will deliver food to students, and students will eat lunch at their desks.

High school students will be required to wear a mask in school spaces where social distancing is not possible, such as in hallways and common areas. Masks will not be mandatory in class.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Full-time classes will also resume in P.E.I., where staff will receive training on how to maintain health and safety protocols within classrooms to mitigate infections.

Parents are being encouraged to drive their kids to and from school to reduce the number of passengers on school buses. Drop-off and pickup times, as well as lunch breaks and recess will also be staggered to avoid crowding.

When available, class sizes will be reduced in order to accommodate distancing and students will work in cohorts or bubbles.

Students are not required to wear masks to school, but all staff and students in Grades 7 to 12 are "strongly recommended" to wear masks when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Newfoundland and Labrador's back-to-school plan aims to return to full-time in-class attendance with the option of a return to remote learning or hybrid model if the COVID-19 risk increases.

Individual school districts will determine what scenarios work best for their schools and are responsible for configuring classrooms and other spaces to maintain physical distancing and developing protocols for hygiene and for isolating students who become ill.

Under some scenarios, the Education Department will aim to limit classroom sizes when the COVID-19 risk is considered low to moderate. Priority will be given to students in kindergarten through Grade 6, kids who have special needs, and for children of essential workers.

Students and staff will also be required to go over a COVID-19 exposure and symptom checklist before entering a school.

Neither students nor staff will be required to wear masks at school, but they are allowed to wear masks if they wish. The province says efforts should be made to ensure that students who wear masks are not "stigmatized."

TERRITORIES

In Nunavut, schools will reopen in September with few changes, provided the territory continues to be free of COVID-19.

In the Northwest Territories, school is set to resume but students and staff will undergo daily COVID-19 screening and maintain physical distance with the help of new classroom configurations. The territory has also mandated staggered recess periods and that students wear masks when on busses.

In Yukon, each school will be responsible for adjusting operations to meet provincial guidelines, including physical distancing and reduced class sizes. School officials are expected to share reopening details with the government before September.

With files from CTVNews.ca's Brooklyn Neustaeter, Graham Slaughter and Jonathan Forani

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PIDC Slates Mabuhay Philippines Virtual Festival 2020

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT-Ret.

Mabuhay Philippines Virtual Festival 2020, the pioneering flagship project of the Philippine Independence Day Council- PIDC is slated to take-off on August 22 and 23, 2020. This year's event titled "PAMANA" is the MPF's signature cultural edition to be virtually celebrating in the "world stage" the best and proud legacy of the Filipinos.

The Philippines has a very rich

Morning" shows. A long-time supporter of PIDC, Cristina Carpio, Editor-in-chief of a national lifestyle publication, Marquee Magazine, will be a co-host of the virtual show. Among the stars appearing in the show are Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Magnayon Gray and renowned fashion designers Renee Salud, Francis Libiran, Shanon Pamaong, Kenneth Barlis, Jaki Penalosa and Ditta Sandico. Providing musical entertainment for the fashion show are



Melissa Grelo (2nd from left) will host the Virtual Festival 2020.

and vibrant culture and tradition dating back to the pre-Spanish time and until today. "Pamana" is a Filipino term which means "heritage" in English and "patrimoine" in French. It is just meaningfully right this summertime, amid the pandemic health crisis, that PIDC, a 23-year-old non-profit umbrella organization of Filipino Canadian volunteers, professionals, community leaders and advocates will be showcasing and sharing with the public the home country's wonderful patrimony.

Purposefully the presentation is aimed at paying a special tribute to Filipino front liners and Essential

Torontonians Ma-Anne Dionisio, Martha Joy, Emilio Zarris, Josie De Leon, Jenifer Camacho, Danny Orbillo and Belinda Corpuz. Also included are the fantastic entertainment acts, special performances, eye-opening interviews with celebrities and popular Canadian Filipino TV media personalities making a mark. There will also be important messages of support from several dignitaries in the Canadian scene.

The simulated images event is produced and coordinated by Mabuhay Philippines Festival Chair Norma Carpio, WFG-World Financial Group Senior Executive Vice-Chairman Agnes P. Miranda, PIDC President Ramon Estaris,



Katriona Gray's parents: Father is a Scottish Australian, Ian Gray, and mother is Normita Magnayon from Oas, Albay. CATRIONA ELISA RAGAS MAGNAYON GRAY, Miss Universe 2018.

workers around the world who have continually and consistently served and sacrificed to keep everyone safe and healthy. PIDC salutes its many brave kababayans on their noble tasks! It has the support and the contributions made by its virtual celebration partners, namely TD Canada Trust, The Filipino Channel(TFC), World Financial Group(WFG) and Imperial World, Inc.

The PAMANA virtual presentation will be hosted by Melissa Grelo, a Filipino-Canadian and an award-winning host of Canada's top CTV program "The Social" & "Your

and ably supported by PIDC officers & members, local talents, techno whizzes, volunteers and other stakeholders.

The program will also be promoted globally through Mabuhay Festival partner, The Filipino Channel (TFC) and ABS-CBN along with other PIDC partners worldwide. So come on now! In the comfort of your homes, everyone is invited and encouraged to watch, learn and listen during the 2-day celebration by checking the PIDC website: www.pidccanada.ca and Facebook page: Philippine Independence Day Council

The history behind Labour Day celebrated every 1st Monday of September in U.S. and Canada



File photo of Toronto's 2011 Labour Day Parade. It's one of the largest of the many under way across the country today. Photo Credit: CBC

Before the 1880s, people held sporadic festivities in connection with larger labour movements. Some historians trace the origin of Labour Day to the Nine Hour Movement (1872).

Labour organizations began to hold celebrations more frequently following a labour convention in New York in September 1882. Spurred on by this initial success, the American Federation of Labor and the Knights of Labor actively promoted workers' celebrations on the first Monday in September in the United States. The Canadian chapters of these organizations did the same. Records show similar gatherings in Toronto (1882); Hamilton and Oshawa (1883); Montreal (1886); St. Catharines (1887); Halifax (1888); Ottawa and Vancouver (1890); and London (1892).

Until the early 1950s, labour organizations held similar Labour Day celebrations throughout Canada. They tread a fine line between politics and pleasure, maintaining the tradition of the Victorian-era holidays. The event served as a forum for unions to voice their demands. But it also helped build working-class identity and allowed time for rest and socializing outside the workplace.

The image of the tradesman and the male breadwinner was front and centre in the festivities. Although working women attended and helped organize events by preparing food for participants, they rarely featured in the parade. The military-style marching was at odds with the image of respectability imposed upon women at the time. But for a few exceptions, their role was limited to waving at the crowd from floats as wives or ancillary workers (see Women in the Labour Force). The absence of unskilled and non-unionized workers also limited the participation of immigrant workers, members of racialized communities and Indigenous people.

The parade was the main event. Depending on the city, it could attract thousands of participants and spectators. It became more elaborate over time. Drawing inspiration from other popular parades, organizers added floats and marching bands. In Quebec, the holiday had a strong

religious connotation. This grew with the development of Catholic unionism. Particularly influential in Quebec was the 1921 creation of the Catholic Workers Confederation of Canada. In 1960, it became the Confederation of National Trade Unions.

Decline of Labour Day

In the 1950s, Labour Day festivities began to draw fewer and fewer participants. In Montreal, organizers tried for a time to replace the parade with a performance and ceremonies. They saw little success, however. There were several reasons for this decline. According to historian Jacques Rouillard, the emergence of a leisure and consumer society meant that people were more likely to leave town or relax with family than attend a parade. Participation decreased further due to changes in the world of trade unions. Craft unions had traditionally organized Labour Day events. But the rise of industrial unionism, representing unskilled and semi-skilled workers, changed the day's impact and meaning. Not everyone identified with the traditional "pride in the trade" message repeated during the celebrations.

Often considered the last summer days of the year, Labor Day weekend is one of the most popular times to visit Montreal in the Québec province of Canada. The September holiday is a long weekend in Canada as well as the U.S., and no matter what your interests are, you're sure to find some way to enjoy the holiday weekend—from sharing a delightful summer brunch with friends to attending a fetish festival to picking apples on local orchards.

Although many attractions, offices, businesses, and governmental agencies will be closed on Labor Day in Montreal, there are still plenty of events and things to do over the holiday weekend.

Montréal offers all kinds of free things to do in summer, including on Labour Day weekend. Relax, play and picnic at Montréal's parks and green spaces such as Mount Royal, where you can go on a walking tour or try bird spotting, row around Beaver Lake and take in the view from the Kondiaronk lookout and chalet.



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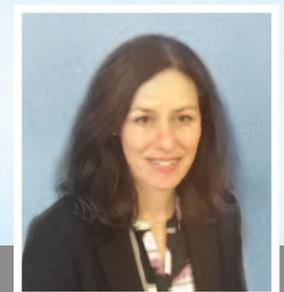
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Butternut Squash Noodles

INGREDIENTS
16 oz. butternut squash noodles
2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425°. Place noodles on a large baking sheet and toss with oil, salt, pepper, and pinch of red pepper flakes. Roast until tender and golden in spots, 10 minutes. Serve noodles warm with Parmesan.



Easy Turmeric Chicken

Turmeric chicken chunks served in a large white bowl over rice with asparagus on the side. Easy turmeric chicken is full of warm, rich spices and comes out perfectly tender and juicy! Plus, this recipe is just 4 main ingredients and ready in 15 minutes!

PREP TIME

5 minutes

COOK TIME

10 minutes

TOTAL TIME

15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in about 1/2 inch cubes
1 1/4 teaspoons turmeric
3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper

(optional)

Juice of 1/2 lemon

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat a large skillet over medium heat and add olive oil.

Season chicken pieces with turmeric, cumin, salt, pepper and cayenne, if using.

Add chicken to the pan and cook until cooked through, 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Squeeze lemon juice over cooked chicken, serve warm and enjoy!

NOTES

Use boneless, skinless chicken breasts but you could also do this with boneless, skinless chicken thighs that you cut up into smaller pieces.

The cayenne here is optional. It adds just a hint of heat



Ginataang Tahong (Spicy Mussels in Coconut Milk)

INGREDIENTS

1 kilo mussels, (wash and clean thoroughly)
2 cups coconut milk/cream
2 red siling labuyo (bird's eye chili pepper)
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp ginger, minced
2 tsp cilantro, minced
2 tsp lemon grass, minced
2 tsp garlic, minced
1 tsp sesame oil
Lime juice from 1 lime
Pinch of Magic sarap (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

In pan heat oil, saute garlic, siling labuyo, ginger and lemongrass. Add the mussels and add the coconut milk. Cook till all shells open. Add sesame oil, lime juice, cilantro. Season with magic sarap, salt and pepper according to your taste. Simmer and constantly stir until coconut milk curdles and becomes creamy thick. Turn off heat. Serve in bowls with rice on the side. Enjoy!



Homemade Fish Ball

INGREDIENTS:

200 grams of fish filet, mashed (boiled in water with salt and pepper)
1 cup of water from the boiled fish
2 cups of flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp of pepper
3 cloves of garlic, minced
3 tbsp of minced onion
3 tbsp of minced red bell pepper
3 tbsp of minced scallion/onion leaves
1 egg, beaten
oil for frying

INSTRUCTIONS:

Mix flour and baking powder together. In a bowl or food processor, mix all the ingredients and stir well until all ingredients are fully incorporated. Cover the bowl with a plastic wrap and set aside the mixture for 30 minutes.

Dip/wet a spoon in a glass of water, scoop some fishball mix/batter and make a ball in your palm by the help of the spoon.

Deep fry the first fish ball batter in a low heat until the color turn into light brown. Taste it first and adjust the taste of the mixture or batter before frying the next batch .

You can make a perfect round/circle fish balls by forming it in your palm. Use extra flour if the batter will stick into your hands. If you want to save some of the fish balls for later use, you can boil them in a boiling water and keep it in your freezer. Defroze them later and fry.

Use sweet and sour sauce for dip or make a Filipino style fish ball brown sauce. Enjoy!!!

Filipino Style Fish ball Brown Sauce

1 tsp vinegar
3 tbsp soya sauce
5 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp of cornstarch diluted in 1/2 cup of water
1 cup water
Optional Ingredients:
1 tbsp minced onion
1 tbsp minced garlic
1 tsp minced chili



Sipo Egg

14 INGREDIENTS

Meat
4 oz Ham
20 pieces Quail eggs
Seafood
1 lb Shrimp
Produce
1 piece Carrot
1 can Cream of mushroom
1 tsp Garlic
1 1/2 cups Green peas
1 piece Onion
Baking & Spices
1 tsp Salt and pepper
Oils & Vinegars
1 tbsp Cooking oil
Dairy
1/4 cup Butter
1/2 cup Heavy whipping cream
Liquids
3/4 cup Water
Other
3/4 cup Singkamas (cubed)

INSTRUCTIONS

Melt the butter in a cooking pan. Add the cooking oil. Once the mixture becomes hot, saute the shrimp for a minute per side. Remove the shrimp and set aside. Meanwhile, saute the onion and garlic. Put-in the carrot and green peas. Add the ham (this is an optional ingredient). Cook for 3 minutes. Pour-in the water (I used water with shrimp juice in the video). Let it boil. Cook for 1 minute. Add the quail eggs and shrimp. Stir. Pour-in the cream of mushroom and table cream. Stir once more until the ingredients are well distributed. Add water chestnuts, salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving bowl. Serve. Share and enjoy!



Steamed Ube Cakes

INGREDIENTS

2 cups purple yam, washed, peeled and cubed
2 cups sweet rice flour
1-1/2 cups water
1 cup sugar
1-1/4 cup coconut milk
4 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 cup grated coconut

INSTRUCTIONS

Cover yams with water and boil until tender or soft. Drain and put through a ricer. Mash until smooth. Mix flour and water in a bowl to form a thick batter. Add sugar and mashed yams. Blend well. Strain to remove lumps. Add coconut milk and the baking powder and mix well. Pour mixture into greased muffin pans to 2/3 full and steam over boiling water about 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Serve hot, warm or at room temperature, topped with coconut. Makes 3 dozen cakes.



Social Tidbits

Fely Rosales Cariño

Thankfully, the great weather is here! Who could have thought that 2020 will give us the most memorable AND unbelievable summer of all? The most awaited season of the year when teachers and students look forward to a lot of sun and fun, fishing aficionados ready their boats and equipment, plans for camping, cottage trips, backyard barbecues, and staycations ... all these were turned upside down by the Covid 19. Little by little we have returned to normalcy as stores, malls and restaurants opened their doors to eager customers! While we await daily news from health authorities, we have learned to go about our daily routine. We hope and pray that in the midst of adversity, we learn what really matters in life, our loved ones, our health, our relationships, etc. Let's bring our supplications to the God of Hope and lift up our nation, our leaders, our community, the frontliners, the afflicted, our neighbors, you and I. Let us pray for wisdom, healing, and peace to navigate these uncertain times to the One who knows for certain what is yet to come.

With limiting the number of people that can congregate at one time in one place, President of the Chess Club Manny Lagasca mobilized his members for picnic in the park. Cherry Palmos, Vice President of FilCan Social Club sent me pleasant news about the Covid-19. Of course, when club members get together, there is a chess game or a tournament of some sort. Food was a-plenty, delicious, and in large quantities. After a long 'seclusion,' everybody seemed to have

relished a return to some sort of freedom, yes!

The second organization that ventured into the great outdoors were some officers and members of the council led by Sir Dario Boco (President of the Council of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec, CFCAQ) & wife Lady Claire. This was on August 8 when many of Montreal's enthusiasts were out in force. The destination was Rawdon Resort, Quebec and although we made table reservations, we found ourselves struggling to find a spot. Despite the searing heat, the sun displayed itself in regal splendor and we determined to enjoy the delicious food we all brought. Dario & Claire brought passengers with them in their black Jeep. They were followed by Gerry & wife Linda with passengers in their red Jeep. CFCAQ past President Sir James and Lady Rose De La Paz were with Warlie Basbacio and yours truly in their red Jeep – thus completing the jeep brigade! We had fun just sitting under the shade with the refreshing wind blowing around us. Doris Tabo-oy was the videographer of the day. The Rawdon resort boasts several entrances. One entrance displayed a silent and calm river, while another entrance showed the rapids that drew the bikini-clad crowd. Many went swimming but none of us did, except the three youth members who rented a kayak each and enjoyed paddling through until the hour was consumed. After lunch we all drove to Dario's & Claire's residence and enjoyed the food we weren't able to consume in

From Page 7 Eligibility

permit allows it.

Students already in Canada for the winter, spring and summer terms were assured that they wouldn't lose their eligibility for a post-graduation work permit if they were forced to complete more than 50% of their program online, reduce their studies to part-time or take a break from their studies completely as a result of restrictions on classroom learning due to the pandemic.

Until August 31, 2020, international students are permitted to work more than 20 hours per week off-campus during their academic session if they are employed in an essential service or function.##

COVID-19: Back-to-school Rally August 23rd, 2020

On the eve of teachers' return to school and only a few days before the return of students, parents, students and school staff rallied in front of the offices of the Minister of Education to express their concerns and their dissatisfaction with the back-to-school plan.

According to participants, too many questions remain unanswered, especially since the new school service centers have until the 15th of September to present their emergency measures, a full two weeks after school activities resume. The last school year was profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. For school staff members, significant concerns about health and safety in the workplace remain: "Many schools are already in a sorry state. Problems with mold, ventilation, plumbing... our schools were already making us sick and the custodial staff was already overworked. Now, we are told we will have to disinfect classrooms and materials, and everyone must wash their hands many times a day. We cannot imagine how we will accomplish all this!", says Élyse Bourbeau, a high school teacher.

We also question how all educational services will be maintained in this context, particularly for vulnerable students and those with special needs. The back-to-school plan calls for the respect of all regular provisions as well as extra measures for catching up and

Rawdon. The afternoon turned out to be as enjoyable, if not more, because of the pleasant conversations while feasting on Dario's drinks and barbecue and enjoying the loving preparations of Lady Claire. At Rawdon, the boys James, Dario, Hadgel, etc enjoyed watching the ladies and listening to their green jokes which made us convulsed with laughter. Oh and they commented on the ladies! Also attending the picnic were Neonita Gatoc and son Jose, Alejandrina Ablog, Sir Ernesto & Cristine Galcon, Vina & Carlito Lacsamana with nephews, Cherry Palmos, Stephanie Danzil, and others followed in their respective cars.

Here are a few impressions I've gathered from a few Montrealers who recently visited the Philippines. Let me start with Rebecca Aguilar, a popular member of the Pasaway Club of the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM). She went home to Baco, Mindoro for a month especially to visit her ailing, 92-year-old sister. While there, she also met with relatives and friends. She visited her favorite market and enjoyed "halo halo". She was surprised to observe cleanliness all over the market and in the streets. She came back with a happy and memorable visit except that a week after she arrived back here, her sister passed away. Where there is happiness, there is also sadness. Condolences, Rebecca, from your line dancing and Pasaway friends. Another Pasaway member who visited the Philippines is Trining Jimenez who went straight to Isabela. She commented that her town is super clean and that the streets are now very wide. She met with relatives, elementary and high school friends. She relates, "I saw my ex-boyfriend who didn't like the idea of my leaving our town to pursue nursing. After a short and pleasant conversation, I managed to let him know that I am already married to John François Payette of Montreal."

Dolly Belandres from the Pasaway club also went home to Bangued, Abra for three months. She

consolidating pedagogical material from last year. Teaching staff is asked to "provide particular attention to the negative effects caused by the pause in schooling" as well as providing educational services to students who will not be attending school in person. However, no additional resources have been announced: "Obviously, as usual, we will do all we can for the well-being of our students. But we were already being asked to do more with less, long before the pandemic. We would have liked to receive some additional support. The 20 million dollar investment announced at the beginning of the week -- that's barely enough for one new hire per school" explains Alex Pelchat, elementary teacher.

The pandemic has also moved ahead many of our colleagues' retirement plans, which is no help to the teacher shortage we have experienced for several years now: "Our colleagues are retiring or changing careers, others have health risks and will not return to work in person. Additionally, with Law 21, we are excluding qualified teaching staff on the pretext of maintaining

arrived in time for the town fiesta, just a few days before the lockdown. She was only able to visit the beautiful rolling hills in Apao, Tineg, a 2-hour scenic drive among the green and rushing creeks. She exclaimed, "What I enjoyed best was eating the fresh veggies I used to have and riding the tricycles wherever I went!" Another balikbayan was Warlie Basbacio who couldn't hide her joy in seeing all her relatives and friends. She enthused, "I went home to Naguilian, La Union, for three weeks to visit relatives and friends and primarily to discuss everything that relates to properties and real estate". Apparently, she needs to go back again sometime to sell those properties once and for all. She said she liked the improvements she saw in her town like the new buildings, a new mall, the cleanliness of the public market and the beautification done in their town plaza.

In the meantime, Sir Gerry & wife Lady Linda were too busy to go around but didn't miss visiting Poracay (with a "P" so as not to confuse it with Boracay) in Pampanga. While there, they visited the new house of another Montrealer, Sir Budz Sarmiento who lives in Mendez, Cavite. They, too, noticed improvements on bridges and building infrastructures, peace and order in their town and in Nonoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), and general cleanliness! They were there for 6 weeks to visit their hometown of Alcala, Pangasinan and spent days bonding with his high school friends. However, he stated with a tinge of dejection, that he was unable to see some relatives, college classmates, especially his fraternity brothers belonging to Omega Rho Omicrons in Central Luzon State University (CLSU). But he couldn't hide his joy in his present and future venture –completing to build his house in Deca Home Subdivision in Angeles, Pampanga.

Lastly, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him (Romans 15:13). God Bless and see you next issue!

secularism in schools. In short, we really wonder if there will be one teacher per class, and how we plan to replace these teachers if they were to get sick!" adds Pelchat.

Despite these concerns, teaching staff will be at their posts tomorrow morning, masks and disinfectant gel on hand. "It is definitely worrisome, and we still have many questions, but we will be there to welcome and reassure our students. We will not, however, do so at the risk of our health and the health of the students. If we are not provided with secure conditions and sufficient resources to do our work safely, we will not hesitate to increase the pressure" concludes Élyse Bourbeau, "When our contract negotiations resume, it might be a good time to make our voices heard." Information and interviews:

Alex Pelchat (Anglophone media): 438-830-0420 alexguytelchat@gmail.com

FILIPINO STAR

SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

For Golden, the pandemic is the perfect time to 'give than receive'



Golden Cañedo

Golden Cañedo originally planned to have a debut party for her 18th birthday last April 5. She had decided to have it in Manila instead of her native Cebu, and she already had a theme in mind.

The COVID-19 pandemic had her scrapping all that.

But while things didn't turn out as she had imagined, her celebration ended up being more meaningful, when the young singer used the money she had saved up to buy rice, which she had distributed to her townmates in Minglanilla.

"I was talking to my lola, who told me that lots of people there lost their jobs and are going hungry. They weren't ready," she said in a recent video interview.

"So I told my mother that instead of having a party—which is just one day of eating—it would be better if I could give people food."

This time, Golden would rather give than receive.

"Lining up for gifts or aid during Christmas and other occasions was something I have experienced. I know what it feels like to receive something. But I also remember dreaming that, one day, I would be the one doing the giving," related Golden, who also hopes to do benefit concerts for those affected by the ongoing health crisis.

Golden, who won the first season of GMA 7's talent search

"The Clash," is doing well mentally and emotionally. But watching the news can be a bit dispiriting, she admitted.

"You realize that a lot of people are suffering. That's why I try to bring some cheer to my followers by posting some quotes. My music is also something I use to make people feel that they're loved. I believe that's one of the things I can offer as a singer," she said.

Aside from the debut party, the quarantine also thwarted some of her scheduled gigs. She was especially looking forward to the Florida concert she was set to do with Martin Nievera and Jaya early this year.

"Wala namang hinayang. If this isn't the right time for me, then I will just continue singing. I always hope that there's a next time and a next year. God has a plan for everything," she said.

Golden's latest single, "Walang Hanggang Sandali" (GMA Music) is the work of four formidable artists and composers—Jim Paredes, Yumi Lacsamana, Ebe Dancel and Herbert Hernandez. The ballad, which talks about destiny and chance encounters, is also the product of Filipino Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers' first master camp.

"I feel honored to have been entrusted with this song,

because I look up to its composers and listen to their songs," she said. The song resonates with her, Golden said, because she met her nonshow biz boyfriend in a "chance encounter." "We met each other in New York during a show there. Then, we started messaging each other," related Golden, who recently marked her and boyfriend's first anniversary.

"He lives in the US, so we're in a long-distance relationship. But I hope I can visit him soon when it's safe," she added. Being in a romantic relationship has given her more confidence to interpret love songs. "Because I can now relate to the song's message, I feel like I can give it more justice," she pointed out. "But otherwise ... if I can't fully relate to the song, I just try to put myself in the story."

Golden is making the most of her time at home studying for school, honing her singing and guitar-playing skills, making vlogs and trying her hand at writing songs.

"I have always been a homebody, so I'm not so sad about not being able to go outside. I have been learning a lot of new things," she said. "And being with my family is more than enough for me to be happy." ■

#MeToo, #HijaAko: Filipina recounts Harvey Weinstein



Ambra Gutierrez

Women are finally speaking up about injustice.

Three years after the newsbreaking story that caused the upheaval of Hollywood, movie mogul Harvey Weinstein starts serving time for rape and sexual assault. The women who stepped forward to testify against him once again share their stories in Discovery Channel's documentary "Harvey Weinstein," premiering on Friday, July 17, at 9:50 p.m.

In this hour-long special, viewers will hear testimonies from five women whose efforts helped in convicting a long-standing predator who relied on his influence and money to escape accountability. Among them are Rowena Chiu, Weinstein's former assistant who was previously bound by a non-disclosure agreement, and Ambra Gutierrez, an Italian-Filipino model who captured an audio recording of Weinstein's misconduct.

As a sign of support for the movement, Filipinos recounted their own experiences of sexual harassment by posting on social media with the #MeToo hashtag. Years after the movement gained momentum, the fight for women's rights and gender equality in the Philippines continues as evident in the recent issues of rape culture and victim blaming challenged through the #HijaAko hashtag.

Follow the stories of the five women who dared to speak against the injustices they experienced and gain access to previously unseen documents and forensic evidence connected to the landmark case for women's rights on Weinstein. Tune in to Discovery Channel on Sky Cable CH 39, Signal TV CH 140, and Destiny Cable CH 56. ■

Brace yourselves for a 'beauty-less' year



The reign of 2019 Binibini beauties is extended, from left: Bb. Pilipinas Supranational Resham Saeed, Miss Universe Philippines Gazini Ganados, Bb. Pilipinas International Patricia Magtanong, Bb. Pilipinas Intercontinental Emma Tiglao and Bb. Pilipinas Globe Leren Mae Bautista.

Let's start with the good news: The reign of the 2019 queens has been extended to next year, no thanks to the invisible enemy that has rudely disrupted life as we knew it, including the staging of beauty contests. They are: Bb. Pilipinas-International Patricia Magtanong, Bb. Pilipinas-Globe Leren Mae Bautista, Bb. Pilipinas-Supranational Resham Saeed, Bb. Pilipinas-Intercontinental Emma Mary Tiglao, Miss World Philippines Michelle Dee, Miss Universe Philippines Gazini Ganados and Mutya Pilipinas Asia Pacific Klyza Castro.

Except for the 2020 Miss Earth Philippines which held its

pageant online (hosted by Paolo Bediones and won by Roxie Baeyens) several weeks ago and the 2020 Miss Universe Philippines (to be staged by the new team led by Shamcey



2019 Mutya Pilipinas Asia Pacific Klyza Castro.

Supsup and Jonas Gaffud; until last year, it was the Bb. Pilipinas Charities, Inc./BPCI that picked the country's Miss U bet) will be pushed through maybe in October, the other pageants have been postponed to next year, including Mutya Pilipinas Asia Pacific, Miss International, Miss Supranational, Miss America and presumably Bb. Pilipinas (no announcement so far).

"It will be a relatively 'beauty-less' year," rued Arnold Vegafria, franchise-holder of the Miss World Philippines pageant. "We are not holding it this year. The Miss World pageant where our winner competes has been moved to next year." (According to Gaffud, there's no announcement yet if the Miss Universe pageant will still be held or postponed and, if ever, it will be the first time since its founding in 1952.)



2019 Miss World Philippines Michelle Dee.

But don't despair, beauty-contest lovers. There's a consolation according to BDO executive and Aces & Queens member Gerry Diaz (Funfare's other "beauty expert").

"They can watch many 'beauty-ful' shows," he assured. "Nice alternatives." ■

Bong Revilla to be discharged from hospital after receiving COVID-19 treatment

Senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. revealed today that he will be discharged from the hospital and will continue his novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) treatment at home.

In a Facebook post, the actor shared the "great news."



Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. sharing his COVID-19 status from his hospital bed.

"The doctors have cleared me for discharge. I am so excited to go home. Hindi pa po tapos ang aking pagpapagaling, but they said I am strong and well enough to continue treatment at home," he said.

"Again, maraming maraming salamat po sa inyong mga panalangin. Sobrang nakakataba ng puso ang inyong mga ipinarating na dasal at mga words of encouragement and well wishes. I cannot thank all of you

enough."

Yesterday, the solon shared in a separate post that he is responding well to his medication and treatment after he was rushed to the hospital due to pneumonia.

In his Facebook page, the actor-politician thanked his supporters for the prayers and concerns.

"Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat na hindi bumitaw at tuloy-tuloy na nagdasal para sa aking kalusugan," Bong said.

"I am responding well to the treatment and medication, and with your prayers, I am beating COVID-19."

Bong thanked God for guiding the health workers in this difficult time. He also express gratitude to all frontliners for their sacrifice for the country.

"Thank you dear God for guiding all health workers and giving them the strength to push on in these difficult times, and blessing them with your healing hands for them to in turn heal us," he said.

"Salamat sa mga doktor at nurse na susi sa aking paggaling at paggaling ng marami nating mga kababayan. Thank you all. Thank you."

Last August 10, Bong shared that he tested positive for COVID-19 shortly after someone from his household and a member of his staff got the deadly virus. ■

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Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.15*

'It's important to start brand new': Liza Soberano on restarting after ABS-CBN shutdown



Liza Soberano

When ABS-CBN was denied of its franchise renewal last month, among the thousands of employees who lost their jobs are the network's superstars like Liza Soberano.

"It's so weird to be not doing anything when you're so used to doing everything like I had the routine of waking up at five in the morning to go to a taping and then on weekends I would have commercial shoots. And when all of that goes away, it was like everything was deafening silence. I was like 'Is it the end of the world, end of my life, now?'" Liza confessed on what her "new normal" felt like in a recent interview with Philstar.com and other media for her launch as new Nivea endorser.

Apart from losing her high-rating TV series "Make It With You" with boyfriend Enrique Gil, Liza was forced to close her spa since such businesses are still restricted under community quarantine.

"Of course, I miss the relaxing feeling of the spa, but of course, our safety is what matters," she said.

Out of job and out of business, Liza thought of starting anew by venturing into what she previously had no time for: Vlogging.

"It's because Tito Ogie (Diaz, her manager) also told me that since I will not be so visible on TV anymore, I have to be more visible elsewhere. Also, during the pandemic, I realized that I couldn't connect to my supporters anymore because we aren't seeing each other, I don't have a project. I want to put an effort for them because they've put in so much effort for me. I want to put in more effort to make them more happy, for entertainment."

Besides as a platform to connect with her fans, she looks at her vlog as a digital channel for her

advocacies.

"At first, I didn't know what to do, I didn't know what to think of it, but as time went by during quarantine, I realized that there's more to life. I realized that there are a lot of things I haven't figured out about myself, of course, and about the things that I want to do in the future. And of course, I realized that it's important to start brand new."

In terms of career, Liza is taking it day by day and is eager to accept projects that come her way.

Related: Ogie Diaz confirms LizQuen got offers from GMA, TV5, Viva

"The one plan that is concrete is I want to finish my studies. Hopefully, to become a counselor in the future," shared the star, who also dreams of being a future humanitarian.

To those who lost their jobs during the pandemic just like her, Liza said: "I just want to let them know that there's something to be hopeful about... It doesn't really matter what other people say. What matters is what is important for you."

Similarly, she asked people, especially on social media, to be more sensitive about others' feelings especially since studies show anxiety is on the rise due to the pandemic.

"The people around you should also be more sensitive of what to say. Be more or conscious of the words to say to other people. We should try to be nicer to everybody especially since we're all going through the same thing," the actress enthused.

"It's not good to pick up on other people's flaws, making fun of people. It's time for everyone to connect more together in battling the crisis."

Is Willie running in 2022?



Willie Revillame (with Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque): Happy just to serve the needy

It happens every time the election season is approaching — the guessing game is that Willie Revillame is casting a misty-eyed look at the 2022 elections.

In the 2016 elections, rumors flew thick and fast that Willie was running for an unspecified position and location, and the same thing happened in 2019. The speculation must be generated by the fact that Willie has been helping Filipinos in dire need during the pandemic through his

GMA show Tutok To Win (TTW) which he put up in March while locked down in his Puerto Galera's little paradise.

Two weeks ago, he announced a donation of P5 million from his own wallet for jobless jeepney drivers reduced to begging on the streets, pledging the same amount next month. That's beside the financial help he extended to the families of the OFWs who perished and were injured in the Beirut explosion, and the daily cash prizes (ranging from P5,000 to P50,000, and more) that he gives away to lucky TTW viewers (mostly from depressed areas).

Now, isn't there any, well, "strings attached" to his friendship with Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque whom Willie very kindly accommodated in his Wil Tower by building there a small studio where Sec. Roque used to hold his briefings?

"I just want to help the government," said Willie.

Once and for all, can he categorically say what his 2022 plans are?

"Gusto ko simpleng buhay lang at makatulong," said Willie.

If he can help many people as it is, as an entertainer, why mess it up by jumping into the political arena? ■

Actress-turned-Carmelite nun Chin Chin Gutierrez asked to pray for Philippines amid COVID-19 pandemic



Chin Chin Gutierrez

Former actress Chin Chin Gutierrez is now a full-pledged nun, according to veteran showbiz columnist Lolit Solis.

In her Instagram account, Lolit said she's happy that Chin Chin fulfilled her calling.

"Ang gandang balita na ngayon ay isa ng full pledged Carmelite nun si ChinChin Gutierrez. Magandang balita dahil mula sa glittering world ng showbiz heto si Chinchin Gutierrez isang mahusay na actress pero mas pinili ang spiritual growth," Lolit wrote.

It was March last year when

rumors circulated that Chin Chin became a Carmelite nun and is now reportedly known as Sister Lourdes.

"Nuon pa balita na pumasok si Chinchin sa kumbento, isang malaking hakbang papunta sa sisterhood at heto ngayon, isa ng madre ng Carmelite mission," Lolit said.

"Isang mahusay na artista na mas pinili ang maging madre upang masilbihan ang spiritual needs ng tao," she added.

Lolit then asked for Chin Chin to pray for the country in the midst of the pandemic.

"Pray for us Sister Chinchin, iyan ang kailangan natin ngayon, ang dasal ng mga tulad mo. Pray for us," Lolit said.

Before becoming a nun, ChinChin was an award-winning actress known for her roles in "Maalaala Mo Kaya: The Movie," "Sa Aking Mga Kamay" and "Jose Rizal," to name a few.

She was also an environment advocate and the founding chairman and president of the ecological foundation Alaga LAHAT, which she created in 2006.. ■

Celebs give fans a peek into their palatial homes



Derek Ramsay

Erich Gonzales, Dominic Ochoa and Derek Ramsay gave fans a glimpse of the house each of them lives in.

“Welcome to my humble home. This house is a reflection of my personality. Simple and minimalist,” read the description of Erich’s “House Tour” on her YouTube channel.

According to her, it’s one of the “most requested” videos by fans and so she finally granted it.

The 29-year-old star showed her living room. It has high ceiling, with furniture and room décor in neutral colors. Her sofa and six-seater dining table are custom-made.

And Erich seems to be a “plantita” as her living room, powder room, kitchen and dining area have different types of plants and flowers!

The Kapamilya actress also showed her lanai and garden. The tour also included a glimpse of her dirty kitchen, laundry area, stock room, maid’s bedroom, and garage where her vehicles are parked.

Erich’s backyard has space ready for herbs and spices to be planted.

At the end of the video, the actress revealed how she got her home.

Erich said she bought the land when she was 22 years old. After years of saving up for it, construction began in 2014. The house was completed that year.

“And to make the story short, six years old na ang bahay. So bakit ito ‘yung napili kong patayuan ng house? It’s because I really fell in love with the view. Imagine lang waking up to that

every day,” she shared. “Parang it’s clean and I feel like I’m super close to nature kasi kung maririnig niyo ‘yung mga chirping ng birds. Dito, makakakita kayo ng iba’t-ibang kulay ng butterflies, caterpillars; super daming halaman, puno; super ganda ng sunset and sunrise.”

Of course, Erich is proud of the house because it’s product of her “hard work.”

Dominic’s tour was through Star Magic’s online show “Welcome Kayo Dito.”

Upon entering the house, the 46-year-old actor said they give importance to guests’ safety as well as the residents so the use of the automatic alcohol dispenser and disinfecting mat are must.

Their Mediterranean-inspired crib is already four years old, yet it’s neither fully furnished nor finished.

The actor expressed his desire to buy artwork made by his colleagues in showbiz, particularly those by Solenn Heussaff, Heart Evangelista, Joey de Leon, Richard Gomez, and Xian Lim.

He believes paintings at home are “good conversation piece.”

In the “clean” kitchen and dining area, Dominic showed how he and his wife have been productive amid quarantine by selling fruits and different types of food like dips, ice cream, wagyu, and gourmet tinapa jars. Dominic, himself, delivers the good around their village.

He also gave a glimpse of his wife’s teacup collections. Dominic collects vintage cars including a 1968 Volkswagen Beetle convertible, a 1978 Ford

Escort, a 1995 all-original Range Rover, his 2018 Vios Cup car, and one from his college days which he considers his “lucky car.”

He also showed his “small toys” as 2013 Piaggio Vespa PX200 and his son’s Monkey Bike or Honda Z series and Yamaha PeeWee.

The actor bought the lot in 2009, then started building the house five, six years later.

Dominic pointed out that all throughout construction, he was very hands-on and picked every item; from the Machuca tiles to the appliance and furniture.

“Yung structure — ‘yung contractor (gumawa nu’n) pero lahat ng nakikita niyo from tiles, electrician, finishing, ref, aircon, bubong, finishing sa bahay — ako po ang nag-asikaso nu’n,” he shared.

He finds the task to be “very therapeutic.”

Derek gave a glimpse of his new home that has a “resort” feel.

On GMA’s “Unang Hirit,” the actor showed his four-floor house that has its own elevator. Quite homey, there are six bedrooms and different areas like the gym and entertainment room.

Anyone who walks through his house will most likely appreciate the modern



Erich Gonzales

architecture, artwork by Filipino artists, and the glass doors that lead to lap pool.

“I like to stand (where), in every place, I could see everything,” he said, about his high ceilings living room and wide doorways.

However, the “nicest room” in the house isn’t for him.

“I put a room on the bottom floor for my parents so, fingers crossed, papayag na silang tumira with me,” he shared. “My dad’s 77, and I want them to be with me na. It might happen, and I’m very near.” ■

'Real-life Darna': Director lauds Angel Locsin for saving stuntman's life



Angel Locsin

TV director Lester Pimentel Ong shared an untold story of how Kapamilya actress Angel Locsin became a real-life angel when she saved a stuntman's life.

In his Facebook account, Ong recalled when a stuntman on the set of their former TV series "La Luna Sangre" got heavily injured that was not work-related.

"Gusto ko lang share ang experience ko working with this person. There was one

time, isa sa mga stuntmen namin got heavily injured, naputol ang pinakamalaking buto nya sa hita sa isang aksidente na hindi work related," he said.

"Ang pobreng stuntman, naospital sa orthopaedic center ng mahigit isang buwan, ubos ang ipon at malaking chance hindi na siya makakalakad muli dahil hindi na niya afford ang mga susunod pang operation na kailangan gawin," he added.

The director shared that Angel, along with her driver, visited the hospital and paid everything for the stuntman.

"One late night ng konti na lang tao sa public hospital kung saan nakaconfine si injured stuntman, dumating siya kasama lang ang driver niya... kinumusta si stuntman, consoled his wife and mom, then asked the person in charge of the hospital how much was the accumulated bill at magkano pa ang kakailanganin



Angel Locsin with Direk Lester on set

para makalakad pa ulit si stuntman. Agad nyang binayaran ang bill, nagiwang pabaon at encouraging words sa pamilya, then she left," Ong said.

In an interview with Esquire Philippines, Ong said Angel helped the stuntman not only recover, but also regain his job. As such, he is now one of the country's most in-demand

action directors.

As such, in his Facebook post, Ong described Angel as the "real Darna" and "a true hero behind the camera."

"Siya si Angel Locsin, she is the real life Darna...hero sya kahit sa likod ng camera, kahit walang nakatingin at walang nakakaalam... I just need to share my story of her." ■

Thank you for reading The Star!



North American Filipino Star reader - photo taken at a Bus Stop 124 Victoria/Plamondon (Credit: Daniel Wiener)

PM cites parents' worries, offers provinces \$2B for school safety

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OTTAWA -- The federal government is sending "up to" an additional \$2 billion in to provinces and territories for them to cover the extra costs of ensuring that students will be safe when the fall school year begins, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced on Wednesday.

With schools preparing to welcome back students and return to in-class learning for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March, parents across the country have been concerned about the level of infection control precautions school boards will have in place.

"While every year is different, this September will be unlike any you've had to deal with before. Parents and staff are anxious about what the school year will hold. As a dad, and a former teacher, I get that," Trudeau said.

The prime minister made the announcement at a school in Toronto. The new funding is on top of the \$19 billion "safe restart" plan, which is focused on helping provinces and territories reopen their societies safely. The money is being sent through a new "Safe Return to Class Fund" in two instalments: a first portion this fall, and the second in "early 2021." It will be distributed based on the number of students between ages of four and 18 in each region, and the decision to split the funding up is to "ensure that provinces and territories have support for the whole school year," according to the Prime Minister's Office.

On Wednesday, the prime minister made the announcement at a school in Toronto, alongside Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Ahmed Hussen, Deputy House Leader Kirsty Duncan, and Liberal MP Judy Sgro. The new funding is on top of the \$19 billion "safe restart" plan, which is focused on helping provinces and territories reopen their societies safely.

Trudeau told the premiers about the incoming funding on Tuesday, as it will be up to them to determine how best to spend it, with some facing questions about the adequacy of school ventilation

systems and ensuring there is enough hand sanitizer and staff on hand to keep healthcare experts and what the school experts are saying: classroom sizes. We



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau makes an announcement at Yorkwoods Public School, in Toronto, Ont., on Wednesday, Aug., 26, 2020. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Christopher Katsarov

classrooms clean.

Given education is largely a matter of provincial jurisdiction, Trudeau emphasized that the provinces will make decisions about school and student safety when classes resume. He defended the federal government's involvement, denying wanting to appear as if the Trudeau Liberals were coming in at the eleventh hour to push provinces to do more.

"Over the past week or so, I've heard from so many Liberal MPs, so many parents across the country who are still extremely worried about how that reopening is going to go," Trudeau said. "Now, we've seen the provinces put forward plans for that reopening. And you know, they are confident that they're doing what is necessary, but parents are still concerned. So we said, 'Let's give the provinces even more resources to be able to do everything that is necessary to keep our kids safe.'"

The prime minister said that \$112 million is also being sent to help schools in First Nations communities.

With just weeks left before students return to school, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh called on the federal government to provide this funding as soon as possible, so that the required safety enhancements can be put in place in time for the first day back.

"There is a real need to see dollars that are tied to schools being safer, and specifically what the

healthcare experts and what the school experts are saying: classroom sizes. We

No parent should be losing sleep because they have to go back to work, but aren't confident schools are properly prepared," said Trudeau. "Once people know their kids are safe, they can get back to work with less worries."

Last week, Trudeau was asked if he would be sending his children back to school in September, and he said he hadn't yet decided. Trudeau's three children attend public school in Ontario.

"Like so many parents, that's something that we are in very active discussions on," he said. "We are looking at what the school's plans are. We're looking at class sizes. We're looking at how the kids are feeling about wearing masks."

Ottawa mom Rosalie Awad MacInnis and her husband have made the decision to send their two children back to school in September.

She said the move has brought a mix of excitement and anxiety, knowing that their two kids—going into grades three and five—will be getting back a more structured routine and get to see their friends, but knowing things will be different.

"We're taking a bit of that risk, we feel like the school boards are doing as much as they can. We know it's not going to be perfect, but we're going to give it a try, prepare them as much as possible and you know if things change dramatically, if cases go up and we feel uncomfortable about it, or if they're really not doing well in the environment, we'll be ready to bring them back and try the virtual school," she said.

The maximum funding each province and territory will receive is:

- Ontario: \$763.34 million
- Quebec: \$432.15 million
- Alberta: \$262.84 million
- British Columbia: \$242.36 million
- Manitoba: \$85.41 million
- Saskatchewan: \$74.90 million
- Nova Scotia: \$47.88 million
- New Brunswick: \$39.79 million
- Newfoundland and Labrador: \$26.18 million
- Prince Edward Island: \$10.39 million
- Nunavut: \$5.75 million
- Northwest Territories: \$4.85 million
- Yukon: \$4.16 million

With files from CTV News' Alexandra Mae Jones and Brooklyn Neustaeter

From Page 1 Kamala Harris

Harris, a breast cancer specialist, had moved to Montreal to perform research work at the Jewish General Hospital and teach at McGill University.

"I'm very proud of Kamala," former classmate Hugh Kwok told the Montreal Gazette in a telephone interview Tuesday. "She was a special person, kind and thoughtful, always very interested in helping everyone."

Harris's 336-page memoir, *The Truths We Hold: An American Journey*, doesn't shed much light on her Montreal years — devoting only two pages to that period of her life.

Upon arriving in Montreal, Harris and younger sister Maya attended the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges

school on Côte-des-Neiges Rd. because their mother wanted them to learn French. The only French words the 12-year-old Harris knew when she first arrived came from her ballet class, the San Jose Mercury News reported in a May 2019 story.

As Harris wrote in her book: "I used to joke that I felt like a duck, because all day long at our new school I'd be saying, 'Quoi? Quoi? Quoi?'"

Some observers, such as former Canadian diplomat and newspaper columnist Norman Spector, wonder what Harris really made of the experience.

"What we need to know now is what memories — good and/or bad — Kamala Harris harbours of Montréal, Québec and Canada having lived

among us and having attended Westmount High School," Spector wrote on Twitter Tuesday.

Kwok, who runs the Wingho Auto Classique dealership in Montreal, recalls Harris being a "very popular student" in high school. "She was very involved in the student association and many different clubs. She was very active."

Kwok says Harris and himself were part of a group of 10 Westmount High students from the Class of 1981 who went on to study at U.S. universities after graduating.

While Harris attended Washington, D.C.'s Howard University, majoring in both political science and economics, Kwok went to the University of Michigan on a tennis scholarship.

Patuloy nating protektahan ang ating mga sarili!



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