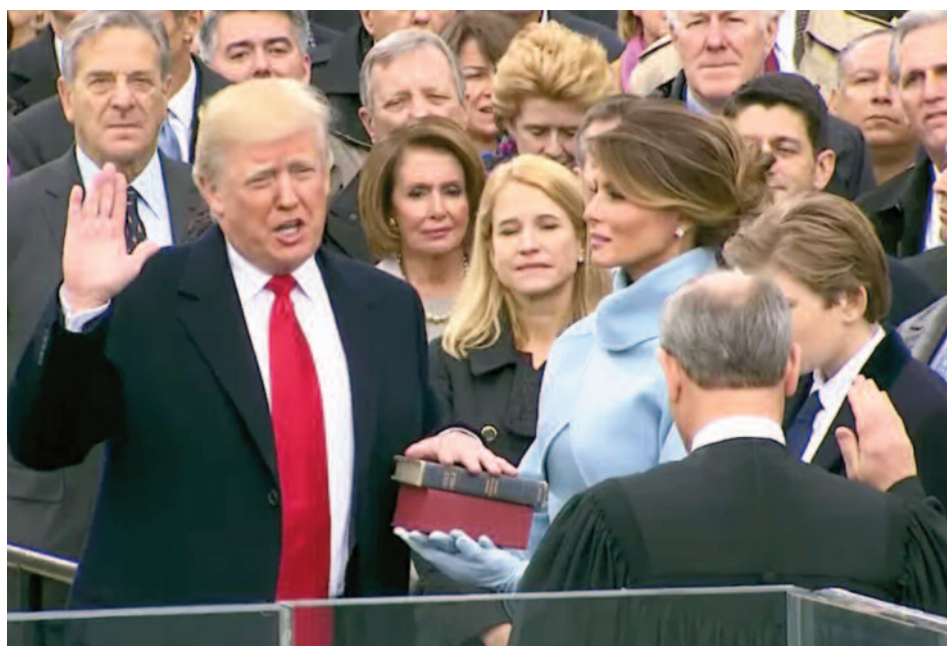


Trump's presidency marks different era in U.S. history

The 45th president of the United States, Donald J. Trump, was inaugurated on January 20, 2017 at 12 noon with the traditional pompous ceremony in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. by Supreme Court Judge John Roberts. He put his hand on the same bible that his predecessor used, but this was the only similarity with other inaugurations. Trump may be known in history as the only president elected without any public service record, and he might also be uniquely different in his leadership style as most historians agree he still has to prove a track record that might be a surprise to all in spite of the worry and concern in the general public's mind.

Trump's inaugural speech of 16 minutes was considered by many people as being dark, critical, tough,



Donald J. Trump being sworn into office while his wife Melania holds the same Bible that President Obama used in his inauguration.

painting a very bleak picture of the country. He said "For too long, a small group in our nation's Capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost. Washington flourished -- but the people did not share in its wealth. Politicians prospered -- but the jobs left, and the factories closed." His "populist rhetoric" promises a lot which might be too difficult to fulfill which eventually may be disappointing.

While the ceremony was going on, a protest march was also around the vicinity of the Capitol. The following day, bigger protests organized by women leaders were held simultaneously around the world's major cities. The massive crowds carrying placards reveal all kinds of

See Page 4 Trump's Inauguration

Typhoon Nina fund raising drive unites community

By Mario J. Rimbao

During the Christmas holidays, what usually comes to mind; family gatherings, gift exchanges, delicious dinners, dancing, and music? Unfortunately, 2016 Christmas celebrations in the Philippines were interrupted by the arrival of Typhoon Nina, which left a huge mark of sorrow in the Philippines. Like many Filipino Canadians in Montreal, I have relatives and loved ones who suffered major losses.

As usual, after any calamity that occurs in the Philippines, it was nice to see that the Filipino community in Montreal gathered together to help the victims of Typhoon Nina.

Spearheaded by Tenne Rose Dayandante of the Bicol Association of

Quebec, in association with Gilmore College, MMTV and Filipino Star, a concert fundraiser entitled Bangon Bicolandia was held at Gilmore College on January 7, 2017. The general theme of the evening was "Unity in the Community" where over 100 people came to support the event with 20 mind-blowing performances by a VIP list of various Filipino Canadian artists in Montreal. There were some tears shed throughout the evening by both the audience and performers after seeing the destruction that Typhoon Nina did just during the Christmas holidays.

Tenne Rose Dayandante, the

See Page 5 - Bangon Bicolandia



Magda Popeanu, councilor of CDN/NDG borough (standing 8th from the left) poses with the organizers and local talents who volunteered to perform for the fund raising drive, "Bangon Bicolandia", held on January 7th at Gilmore College International headquarters on Cote des Neiges Road in Montreal.

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Philippine News, Opinion Editorials

Is a new 'alliance' in the offing?

PerryScope
By Perry Diaz

Duterte-and-Abe-shake-hands Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official visit to the Philippines on January 12-13, 2017, came at a crucial moment in Philippine Rodrigo Duterte's quest for a place on the table of world politics. Last November, Duterte declared his "separation" from the U.S. in front of his Chinese hosts in Beijing. Then a week later, on his way to Lima, Peru to attend the annual summit of Asia-Pacific leaders, he

sell Duterte weapons at half price including missiles and submarines. Wow! What a deal!

When Putin sent a Russian warship on a goodwill visit to Manila, Duterte visited the warship and told the ship's captain that he hoped Russia would become his country's ally and "protector."

Meanwhile, details are being worked out for Duterte's visit to Moscow in April. It was reported in the news that



Duterte-and-Abe-shake-hands Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official visit to the Philippines on January 12-13, 2017

issued a statement saying, "If China and Russia would decide to create a new order, I would be the first to join." He added that he'd quit the United Nations. Indeed, with an "alliance" that consists of China, Russia, and the Philippines, who needs the United Nations?

When Duterte finally met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Lima,

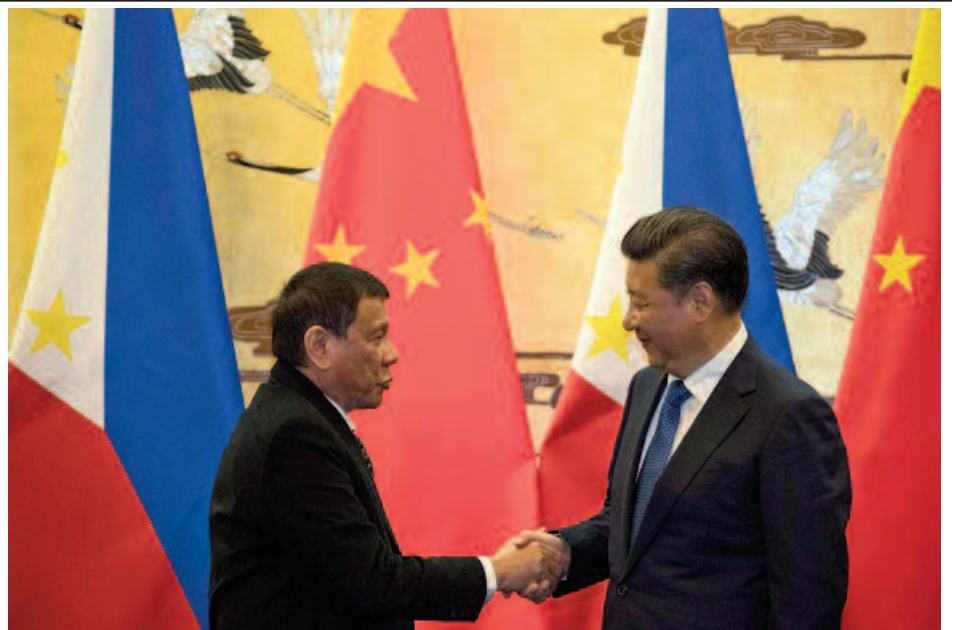


Russian President Vladimir Putin and President Duterte shake hands at their meeting in Lima, Peru.

Duterte ranted a litany of gripes against the United States, to which Putin replied that he shared Duterte's sentiments about the United States and other Western countries. "Our assessments coincide in many respects," Putin said. Putin promised to

time. All Duterte had to do is send someone to pick up the arms which are ready for shipment.

With all the anticipation of Duterte's blossoming military alliance with China and Russia, one wonders how would



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands after a signing ceremony in Beijing, China.

he use such alliance to defend the Philippines from invaders? And who would these invaders be? U.S.? Japan? South Korea? Vietnam? Right now, the only conceivable country that would invade the Philippines is China. Russia doesn't have any core interests in the South China Sea that would give her any reason to attack the Philippines.

Reefs China is building into artificial islands.

With China getting more assertive with her claim of ownership of virtually the entire South China Sea and by building artificial islands on reefs and atolls in the Spratly archipelago — and militarizing them — China is in a position to invade the Philippines. However, a Chinese invasion could be averted if the Philippine government invoked the US-Philippines Mutual

cooperation, it begs the question: Are these "goodies" enough to entice Duterte into taking a detour from his misadventure into the Sino-Russo orbit? The answer is no. So there must be something more promising than what the public is aware of.

Golden opportunity

It's interesting to note that Abe included in his Philippine itinerary a visit to Duterte's home in Davao City, which is extraordinarily unusual. But the significance of his visit to Duterte's residence could be to privately discuss sensitive geopolitical issues that involve their countries in a changing world dynamics, particularly security issues and alliances. Perhaps, a "golden opportunity" has been discussed for which both countries could benefit from. Hmm... My crystal ball is showing a blurred image of what



President Duterte shows Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe his bedroom in his private residence in Davao City

Defense Treaty (MDT). But if the Philippines were governed by a president — Duterte — who is beholden to China and wouldn't invoke the MDT, then China would be in a position to take over the country... without firing a shot.

Abe's visit changed all that. With Abe and Duterte signing various memoranda of agreement on economic and defense assistance including agriculture, transportation, small and medium enterprise, infrastructure, counter-terrorism, drug-rehabilitation projects, and security

could be the Yamashita Gold. Have they finally found it? Eureka!

On a more serious note, Abe's ulterior motive might have been to sway Duterte away from the Sino-Russo axis and bring him back into the fold of the U.S. and her Asian-Pacific treaty allies that includes Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

While the Philippines has been a treaty ally of the U.S. since 1951 when the MDT was signed, Duterte has been distancing the Philippines away from the U.S. and seeking defense alliance

with China and Russia. Thus far, with the U.S. doing nothing to mend her differences with Duterte, it would seem that Duterte is just waiting for the right moment to declare a revolutionary government allied with China and Russia.

Dangerous game

Japanese President Shinzo Abe and

Abe’s reciprocal visit to the Philippines changed Duterte’s attitude towards the U.S. During their meeting, Abe reportedly told Duterte that Japan would offer security and economic support for the Philippines. However, he emphasized the significance of enhancing cooperation between Japan, the U.S., and the Philippines, to which Duterte acknowledged the



Reefs China is building into artificial islands.

Chinese President Xi Jinping. Japanese President Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

But Duterte seems to be playing a dangerous geopolitical game by courting Japan while he is kowtowing to Xi Jinping. Right after his China state visit, Duterte visited Japan. Abe welcomed him warmly and offered economic and military assistance including \$300 million in loans for patrol boats.

importance of the Philippines’ alliance with the U.S. He also assured Abe that he did not enter into a military alliance with China and that he would insist on the rule of law in the South China Sea. Abe agreed that the role of the U.S. remains vital for stability in the region and that the territorial disputes in the South China Sea should be resolved under the rule of law.

New allies: Abe and Duterte



President Duterte visits Russian warship on a good will visit to Manila.

President Duterte visits Russian warship on a good will visit to Manila. Clearly, Duterte’s stance was a 180-degree turnaround from his previous position of “separation” from the U.S., abrogation of the defense agreements with the U.S., and military alliance with China and Russia.

cooperation. These include how to deal with the United States and let them understand the geopolitical situation and realities on the ground,” he added.

Is a new “alliance” in the offing?
(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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From Page 1 - Trump inauguration

issues that concern people such as women's rights, immigration reform, Obama care, civil rights, justice, and some even carried a sign stating Trump is not my president.

More than 1 million people rallied at women's marches in the nation's capital and other cities around the world Saturday on President Donald Trump's first full day in office.

"Welcome to your first day. We will not go away," marchers in Washington chanted.



Former U.S. President Bill Clinton and his first lady, Senator Hillary Clinton and former President George Bush at Pres. Trump's inauguration

Along with women, many in pink hats, plenty of men showed up, contributing to the turnout everywhere from New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles to Mexico City, Paris, Berlin, London, Prague and Sydney.

The Washington rally alone attracted over 500,000 people according to city officials. It was easily one of the biggest demonstrations in the city's



Huge crowd with all kinds of placards, and many marchers wearing pink hats.

history, and as night fell, not a single arrest was reported.

The international outpouring served to underscore the degree to which Trump has unsettled people domestically and abroad.

"We march today for the moral core of this nation, against which our new president is waging a war," actress

America Ferrera told the Washington crowd. "Our dignity, our character, our rights have all been under attack, and a platform of hate and division assumed power yesterday. But the president is not America ... We are America, and we are here to stay."

Turnout in the capital was so heavy that the designated march route along the National Mall was impassable. Protesters were told to make their way to the Ellipse near the White House by way of other streets, triggering a chaotic scene that snarled downtown Washington. Long after the program ended, groups of demonstrators were still marching and chanting in different

parts of the city.

The rally featured speeches from women's rights activist Gloria Steinem, Planned Parenthood President Cecile Richards, Madonna, actresses Ashley Judd and Scarlett Johansson and director Michael Moore, among others.

A group of largely female senators and other politicians took the stage together at one point — including

Kirsten Gillibrand, D-NY; Claire McCaskill, D-Mo.; and newly elected Sens. Kamala Harris, D-Calif.; and Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill.; who addressed the group, as did Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif. Also onstage were Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., and Sen. Cory Booker, D-NJ.

Various causes were attached to the march, which was largely billed as a demonstration in support of women's rights and civil rights but for many had clear political undertones connected to the inauguration of Donald Trump.

Steinem thanked the crowd for showing up, declaring, "We have people power, and we will use it."

"Thank you for understanding that sometimes we have to put our bodies where our beliefs are. Sometimes pressing Send is not enough," she said to the crowd, many of whom wore bright pink knitted hats.

Steinem suggested that the size and energy of the gathering was a positive outgrowth of Trump's election and inauguration.

"This is the upside of the downside. This is an outpouring of energy and true democracy like I have never seen in my very long life. It is wide in age. It is deep in diversity," Steinem said.

She praised "our great leaders" Barack and Michelle Obama, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton, "who told the whole world that women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights," quoting Clinton's speech at a United Nations conference in 1995.

Steinem then turned her focus to Trump.

The new president's "Twitter finger must not become a trigger finger," she said.

Shortly before Steinem took the microphone, Ferrera was one of the first speakers at the rally before the march, calling for supporters to "fight, oppose" the Trump administration.

"Marchers, make no mistake. We are — every single one of us — under attack. Our safety and freedoms are on the chopping block," she said.

Some of the homemade signs at the rally were related to Clinton, Trump's campaign rival. One read, "Still with her," a play on Clinton's campaign slogan, and another read, "Lock him up," flipping a chant that some Trump supporters directed at Clinton during the campaign. Several "Stronger together" posters from the Clinton campaign were spotted as well.

While she wasn't there in person, Clinton gave her support via Twitter. Hillary Clinton @HillaryClinton Thanks for standing, speaking & marching for our values @womensmarch. Important as ever. I truly believe we're always Stronger Together.

During his speech, Moore railed against Trump, telling marchers to take action against his administration.

"We have to get busy, folks. We've got our work cut out for us," Moore said.

At Women's March on Washington, Michael Moore rips up front page on Pres. Trump's inauguration In Chicago, organizers canceled the march portion of their event for safety reasons because of an overflow crowd of an estimated 250,000. People made their way through the streets on their own anyway. In New York, well over 100,000 marched past Trump's home at glittering Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue. More than 100,000 gathered on Boston Common, and a similar number demonstrated in Los Angeles.

In Miami, real estate agent Regina Vasquez, 51, had a sign saying "Repeal and replace Trump."

"I believe that strength is in the numbers and that we should all come out and not make Trump the new normal," she said.

More than 600 sister marches were planned worldwide. Crowd estimates from police and organizers around the globe added up to well over a million.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

President Trump Still Believes Millions Voted Illegally: White House

By MEGHAN KENEALLY Jan 24, 2017, 2:34 PM ET

After being repeatedly pressed about President Donald Trump's unsubstantiated claims that "millions" of people voting illegally in the presidential election, White House press secretary Sean Spicer left the door open to a possible investigation into the claims during a press briefing Tuesday.

On Monday, Trump said during a meeting with congressional leaders in the White House, that "3 to 5 million illegals" voted, according to two Democratic aides who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Spicer told reporters Tuesday "maybe we will" launch an investigation into Trump's claims.

"Anything's possible I think at some point," he later added. "There is no investigation. I said it was possible. Anything is possible. It was a hypothetical question."

Trump has made repeated claims about alleged voter fraud after losing the popular vote in the election in November, though thus far no evidence has been presented that backs up his claims.

"He continues to maintain that belief based on studies and evidence people have presented to him," Spicer said Tuesday.

At least five reporters asked questions on the issue during the press briefing, and at one point Spicer dismissed the suggestion that Trump kept bringing up

the topic of the unsubstantiated voter fraud because the president was upset about the vote count. Spicer said that Trump "won very handily" and "he's very comfortable with his win."

When pressed for specific examples of the evidence that Trump has used as the basis of his "longstanding belief," Spicer cited a 2008 study by Pew and "other studies that have been presented to [Trump]."

The Trump transition team was previously asked about this topic and cited the same Pew Research Study, which came out in 2012 but focused on the results of the 2008 election and the need to update voter registrations.

The primary author of the study in question previously responded, tweeting that "the report made no findings re: voter fraud."

Spicer did not give names or sources for the "other studies."

"We'll see where we go from here but right now the focus that the president has is putting Americans back to work," Spicer said.

Trump's First 100 Days: Delivering on campaign promises

By Elise Viebeck January 23 at 10:50 PM
Tuesday is Day 5 of the Trump administration.

From Page 1 Bangon Bicolandia

main organizer of the successful event, was the hostess of the evening with her MMTV partner Michael Davantes. Singer Franco Sevilla performed an opening prayer through song to start off the evening as the audience looked at a slide show of the destruction Typhoon Nina left in her path. Mayor John Bongat of Naga City sent a video message thanking the efforts of the Filipinos in Montreal for their support of the fundraiser. Singer Neil Castro spoke about Suicide Awareness and prevention in the community he and his band Rebel Rebel Rebel performed their number. The concert included such diverse performances by artists such as Peter Tan, Chris Velasco, Joven, Dominique Brillantes, Jun Ramos, Riley Palanca, Ariane & Chris, Joy Mesina, Maria Calaycay, Christine Toca & Aaron, and Rex Versoza. Many attendees were pleasantly surprised when they heard for the first time the veteran performances of great talents such as Michelle Lao (President of FCAAQ) Adiva-Dexter Ross Estinozo.



Trump shows to reporters a signed executive order

President Trump spent much of his first Monday in office delivering on campaign promises: He withdrew the United States from a major trade agreement, ordered a hiring freeze for most federal agencies, and blocked foreign aid for organizations that perform or discuss abortions.

President Trump hosts a reception for House and Senate leaders including, from left, Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer, House Speaker Paul D. Ryan and House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy. (Susan Walsh/AP)
Supporters welcomed these actions. But by the end of the day, Trump drew

focus away by — what else? — continuing to re-litigate the results of November's election. In a meeting with congressional leaders at the White House, Trump claimed that 3 million to 5 million illegal votes for Hillary Clinton prevented him from winning the popular vote. There are no verifiable facts to back this up.

The comments come after a tumultuous first few days at the White House for Trump. Friday's attendance at the inauguration was one blow; the number of protesters in Washington on Saturday was another. As our colleagues wrote, Trump grew "increasingly and visibly enraged" while watching the media's coverage, feeling

"demoralized that the public's perception of his presidency so far does not necessarily align with his own sense of accomplishment."

RECAPPING TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Here's a quick summary of the president's executive actions Monday.

He signed a memorandum ordering the end of U.S. participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a sweeping trade deal with Asia designed to provide a check on China that had already failed to make it to Capitol Hill for approval. He reinstated the so-called "Mexico City policy" barring foreign aid funds for groups that discuss or provide abortion. The policy has been lifted by Democratic presidents and reinstated by Republican ones since President Ronald Reagan instituted it in 1984. He instituted an immediate hiring freeze for the executive branch, with exemptions for those working in the military, national security and public safety.

Still, there are some campaign promises that will not be fulfilled so quickly, Trump aides indicated, including canceling former President Obama's immigration policies and renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Spicer promises honesty as press secretary, but says 'sometimes we disagree on the facts'

(Filipino Association for LGBT), Lara Portacio, Mark Simbulan (FilCan Idol), Alfred Espinosa, and internationally reknown singer Cherlyn Toca.

Some familiar faces of the Filipino community leadership were seen in the crowd such as Cora Aberin (President FAMAS), Svetlana Suarez (VP FAMAS), Cesar Manuel (VP FAMAS), Jimmy Aquino (President of FCC), Eric Esplana (BAQ), Remgio Jesus Olivares (Knights of Columbus) and Felix Deluna (Knights of Rizal). The mass gathering of the Montreal Filipino community was appreciated by Mrs. Zeny Kharoubbi (who graciously donated the entire Gilmore College space free of charge for the event). She gave the welcomng remarks and expressed how she was impressed by the immediate response of the community to help out in the fund raising drive for the flood victims.

City Councilors Magda Popeanu and Peter McQueen attended the event as well and donated graciously. Provincial Member of National Assembly David Birnbaum, Federal Member of



Tenne Rose Dayandante and Michael Davantes (MMTV hosts) animated the evening performance by local talents for the benefit of Typhoon Nina victims, January 7, 2017 held at Gilmore College.

Parliament Anthony Housefather and City Councillor Marvin Rotrand unfortunately could not make the event but they all pledged to donate

end of the evening, "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much. "Dios ang magbalos" summarizes it all. It is something to think about.

At the end of the night, the final prize for everyone who attended and performed was the tally of over \$5000 raised – the fundraiser was a success. As Tenne Rose Dayandante said at the

Mario Jacinto (M.J.) Rimbao

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IMAGE & FASHION

Michael Davantes
B.A. Specialization in Communications

Twenty candidates of the Miss Universe 2016 pageant were in Vigan as part of a Terno Fashion Show hosted by the historic city. Tasked to design the iconic Filipiniana gowns were Eroll Remijares, Darwin Ramirez, Raffy Sy, Jan Van Paquing, Danika Damo, and Clong Gie Passion Ben — all members of the Ilocos Sur Designers' Guild.

The candidates from Great Britain, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Slovak Republic, USA, Cayman Islands, Thailand, Brazil, Bulgaria, Vietnam, Singapore, British Virgin Islands, Guatemala, Malaysia, Czech

Republic, Uruguay, Belgium, Venezuela, and the Philippines were all graceful when they walked the stretch of the famous Calle Crisologo wearing the Filipino terno.

"It is essential to showcase our traditional dress in an event such as Miss Universe because it promotes the culture and heritage of our country as well as the ingenuity of our people. The terno, for example, is a Filipino masterpiece. It is unique to us, and its innovations and designs are high fashion and world-class," Said Domz Ramos, head stylist of the Terno Cultural Show. ■

Miss Universe 2016 candidates in Cultural Terno Show!

- Photos by Joy Arguil





HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CANADA

Pagkatapos ng pasko, sa kauna-unahang pagkakataon, nagkausap kami ng aking kapitbahay. Dati, “hi” o “hello” lamang ang batian namin kapag nagkikita kami. Sa maigsi naming pag-uusap, may ilang bagay akong nalaman tungkol sa kaniya: Haitian siya, nagpunta sa Miami. Limang taon na siya sa Montreal, kasama ang asawa at anak. “Wala akong working permit sa Miami,” sabi niya. “Patagu-tago akong nagtrabaho sa restaurant. Malakas ang diskriminasyon doon at magulo. Mahirap para sa aking pamilya.” Kapag may nakakausap akong tulad ng aking kapitbahay, hindi ko maiwasang isipin na talagang mapalad ako sa aking paninirahan sa Canada.

Nagreklamo ako sa ginaw kung taglamig pero ang nagpapasigla sa akin ay ang pagdating ng tagsibol, taglagas at tag-init. Walang lindol, walang bagyo dito. Malimit kong naririnig sa mga bagong dating na galing sa Pilipinas ang birong bawal magkasakit doon dahil magastos ang pagpapagamot. Dito, gusto ko ang health system. At sa peryodistang tulad ko, malaking bagay ang pagkakaroon ng kalayaan sa pamamahayag. Kung nasa Pilipinas pa ako nang panahon ng diktaturya ni Marcos, maaaring nadukot, napahirapan at napatay din ako dahil hindi ko mapipigilang batikusin ang mga katiwaliang nangyayari sa pamahalaan. Dito, maaaring batikusin ng reporter ang Prime Minister at pamahalaan nang walang pangamba.

Noong 1994, isa sa mga isinulat ko sa Gazette ay Thanks, Canada. Sinabi ko ang mga biyayang tinatamasa ko rito. Ngayong 2017 ay 150th anniversary ng Canada na tumanggap sa aking bilang mamamayan dito. Nararapat lamang na bumati ako ng Happy Birthday, Canada.

ANO ANG GAGAWIN MO KUNG MAY BUMATI SA IYO NA HINDI MO TIYAK KUNG KILALA O HINDI?

Noong Dec. 31 ay kinuha ko ang aking order na puto at kutsinta sa Kawali (dating Bahay Kubo). Sinalubong ako ng babaeng nagsabi kaagad ng, “Kuya Willie, nandoon ang order mo.” Nagtaka ako dahil alam niya ang pangalan ko pero hindi ko matandaang kilala ko siya.

Malimit na nararanasan ko ang ganitong pangyayari. Nang magkaroon ng gulo sa Federation kung sino talaga ang pangulo nito, tinawagan ko si Josefa Nicolas upang hingin ang kaniyang panig. Hindi pa kami nagkikita at nagkakakilala. Iyon ang

unang pagkakataon na nagkausap kami. Lumipas ang ilang buwan, nagpunta ako sa punenarya nang mamatay si Lydia, asawa ni Ruben Santos. May kausap akong kaibigan nang mapansin kong may nakatitig sa akin. Hindi siya nakatiis at nagtanong, “Ano, kilala mo ba ako? Saglit akong natigilan. “Sorry, you have to remind me where we met,” tanong ko. “Ako si Josefa, ang phone pal mo,” sagot naman niya. Nagkatawanan na lamang kami ng malakas.

Dumalaw rin ako sa punenarya nang mamatay si Bert Santos. May lumapit sa akin at nagsabi, “Kuya Willie, gusto mo ng kape?” Nang umalis siya ay pabulong kong itinanong sa aking katabi, “Sino siya?” “Si Grace Aggabao, “sagot sa akin. Madalas siyang mabanggit ni Bert Santos. Ang nakatatawa ay noong 1990. Hindi pa ako nakihalubilo sa mga Pilipino noon nang may mapanood akong isang lalakeng kumakanta ng My Funny Valentine sa TV Pinoy. Sa isip ko, may “angas” dahil winter pero nakasuot ng puting amerikana at mataas na boots. At may side burns.” Parang nakita ko na siya pero hindi ko matandaan kung saan. Nang magsimula akong magsulat at makihalubilo sa mga Pilipino noong 1996 ay naanyayahan ako ni Nestor Amba sa Oriental Doo, karaoke bar na pinupuntahan ng mga Pilipino. Paglabas ko ng pinto upang manigarilyo ay may bumati sa akin, “Ang tagal nating hindi nagkita.” Nakapagtataka at nakilala ko kaagad si Rose, kasama si James de la Paz. Bigla kong naalaala ang nakita ko sa TV Pinoy na mukhang may “angas.” Si James. At bago kami nagkita sa Oriental Doo, nakapunta na ako sa kanilang bahay noong mga late 70s. Birthday ni James. Kaibigan nila ang aking mga kapatid at naisama ako sa kanilang bahay.

Ngayon, kapag may bumati sa akin na hindi ako sigurado kung kilala ko nga o hindi, nagsasabi ako ng totoo at magalang kong itinatanong kung sino siya at saan kami nagkita. Kung minsan naman, nagkukunwari na lamang ako na kilala ko nga siya.

ANO ANG DIWA NG PASKO SA AKIN?

Nagdiwang ako ng pasko kasama ang aking pamilya – kapatid, pamangkin, bayaw, hipag at apo. Kaugalian naming magkakapatid ang magbigayan ng regalo kahit hindi mahal sa isa’t isa. Ang iba lamang na kasama naming nagdiwang ay ang mag-asawang Hudyo na kaibigan ng aking kapatid. Si Bryan, ayon sa aking kapatid, ay hindi mataas ang pinag-

aralan at itinuturing black sheep sa pamilya na binubuo ng mga propesyonal. Malayo ang loob niya sa pamilya pero malapit sa amin. Katunayan, may pamasko rin ang mag-asawa galing sa amin. Isang kahon ng Ferraro chocolate na nagkakahalaga ng \$17.00 ang ibinigay ko sa kanila. Inabutan naman ako ni Bryan ng sobre. Hindi ko inaasahan ang kalakip dito na \$50.00 cash. “Sa lahat ng Hudyo, sila ang galante,” bulong ko sa aking sarili. Ang higit na ikinagulat ko ay ang nakasulat sa card kung ano ang pagtingin nila sa akin bilang kaibigan – kind, warm and funny. Malimit, kapag nagbibigay tayo ng card, tulad ng Christmas card, ay isinusulat lamang natin dito ang pangalan ng ating pinagbibigyan at pinipirmahan. Subalit high school pa lamang ako nang mabasa ko na mas may kahulugan ang pagbibigay ng card kung lalagyan natin ng personal na mensahe. Si Bryan, ginawa iyon. “While driving, I was thinking what to write,” sabi ni Bryan. “Something that’s coming from my heart.” Naantig ang damdamin ko. Si Bryan, walang mataas na pinag-aralan at itinuturing na black sheep sa pamilya pero may puso. Nagsikap na isulat ang kaniyang nararamdaman kahit may isa o dalawang maling spelling.

“I like what you did,” totoo rin ang sabi ko kay Bryan. “You’re creative.” Kay Bryan na siguro ay hindi nakatatanggap ng papuri sa sariling pamilya, alam ko na malaking bagay ang sinabi ko sa kaniya. Nabasa ko iyon sa kaniyang mga mata. At sa ngiti. Sa akin, ang isang diwa ng pasko ay hindi ang pagbibigay ng mga mahal na bagay kundi ng pagpapahalaga at pagpapaligaya sa kapwa. Ginawa ko iyon kay Bryan.

NADAGDAGAN ANG IBABAYAD NI CUSIPAG KAY SENATOR ENVERGA

Noong November ay tumanggap ako ng kopya ng email ng administrative assistant ni Sen. Tobias Enverga. Ito ang sinasabi, “Ontario superior court orders Balita and Tess Cusipag to pay Senator Enverga \$90,000 towards legal cost in defamation case.”

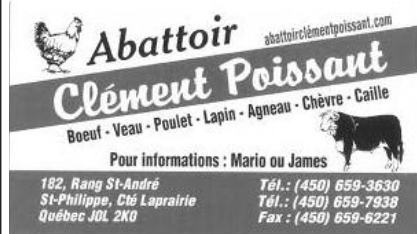
Bukod sa \$90,000 ay pinagbabayad din ng korte ng \$250,000 si Cusipag kay Senator Enverga dahil isinulat niya na sangkot sa fraud ang huli. Hindi naman ito napatunayan.

Si Cusipag ay tulad ng mga ibang manunulat na ginagamit ang kaniyang diaryo upang siraan ang kaniyang mga kagalit. Nagsimula ang galit ni Cusipag nang anyayahan niya si Senator Enverga sa isang press conference. Dumating nang huli si Senator Enverga dahil nakapaglamay pa sa isang kaibigan.

Naalaala ko ang sinabi ni Rosemere, asawa ni Senator Enverga, “Dapat ay magtulung-tulong tayo upang sugpuin ang mga mananulat na tulad ni Cusipag.”

Tama siya.

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Ask the Video Guy

Technological Tidbits
by

Al Abdon

WHAT ARE MY LEGAL RIGHTS TO SHOOT VIDEO IN PUBLIC

BY Roman Zelichenko

When it comes to recording police activities, it's important to know your rights. Read on to learn how to interact with the police when confronted for using your camera in a public space.

From the New York Police Department to the Los Angeles Police Department, and everywhere in between, the police protect and serve the public. They keep us safe at home, at school, and at work, and are always the first to respond to emergency situations. However, given the public scrutiny police forces around the country have received for the past several years and the proliferation of personal digital recording devices, recording police activities has become increasingly common. It is therefore important to understand your rights when it comes to recording them.

Is It Legal to Record a Police Activity in Public?

When it comes to photography alone, the short answer to this question is "yes." According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), if you are in a public space, such as a park or a street, you are legally allowed to photograph anything that is in plain view while in that space, including the activity of police officers, as long as you do not interfere with their law enforcement operations. This is seen as a form of public government oversight, and is championed by free speech advocates and civil liberties unions alike.

While the same principles apply to videotaping, the ACLU notes that there is an important legal distinction between taking photographs and videotaping: the audio portion. While the visual record of a video, which can be seen simply as a series of photographs, should be

fully protected, the audio that is captured during a video recording may be regulated under state wiretapping laws, which vary from state to state. Still, despite the lack of clarity about the audio portion of a video, the ACLU maintains that banning the taping of police officers carrying out their public duty is a First Amendment violation. Recent court cases are consistent with this position.

Recent Developments

In New York City alone, dozens of complaints were filed in 2014 about police officer aggression toward civilian videotaping, according to an April 2015 NBC report and December 2015 article. One of those cases resulted in a lawsuit filed against the city, the NYPD, and the officers involved. That officer was formally charged and arrested in December 2015 for unlawful arrest, illegal search, and official misconduct. In this case, the officer was searching the pockets of a NYC resident outside a nightclub. When a friend raised his cellphone to film the encounter, the police officer grabbed the friend's arm, arrested him, and took him into custody, throwing his phone out of the police car on the way. The nightclub's surveillance cameras captured this encounter.

The ability to record police activity in a public space is your right, and undue restriction of that right may not be tolerated.

While the final result of the case is yet to be determined as of this

writing, the police officer's arrest in itself is telling. The ability to record a police activity in a public space is your right, and undue restriction of that right may not be tolerated.

How Should I Conduct Myself Toward the Police?

If you find yourself in a public space filming or wanting to film a police activity taking place in plain sight, and you are not interfering with legitimate law enforcement operations, it's important to know how to respond to an officer in the event you are told to stop recording.

According to the ACLU, always remain polite and never resist a police officer — verbally, physically, or both. Resisting arrest, whether the arrest is lawful or not, is in itself an unlawful act. If stopped by a police officer for filming, you should ask, "am I free to go?" Until you ask, you are voluntarily being stopped. If the officer says you are not free to go, this would indicate that you are being detained, which requires reasonable suspicion that you are about to or have committed a crime. Finally, if you are detained, ask what crime you are suspected of having committed, and politely remind the officer that it is your right to record a police activity in plain sight and in a public space.

The Search for Filipino Canadian Talent - Year 2" will be starting earlier this year. Here's this year's schedule:

REGISTRATION SCHEDULE:

WHAT: REGISTRATION

WHEN: February 1st to March 31, 2017

PRE-AUDITIONS: April 2nd and 9th, 2017,

WHEN: 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

VENUE: Suite 219, 2525 boul. Cavendish Montreal

LIVE AUDITION #1

April 15, 2017, Saturday, 1:00 to 3:00 PM at the Collège Notre Dame Auditorium, 3791 Chemin Queen Mary, Montréal, QC H3V 1A8.

LIVE AUDITION #2

April 22, 2017 Saturday, 1:00 to 3:00 PM at the Collège Notre Dame Auditorium, 3791 Chemin Queen Mary, Montréal, QC H3V 1A8.

May 6, 2017 - SEMI FINALS (Timing TBD) Collège Notre Dame Auditorium, 3791 Chemin Queen Mary.

June 3, 2017 – GRAND FINALE (Timing TBD) Collège Notre Dame Auditorium, 3791 Chemin Queen Mary. Tickets @ 25\$

INFORMATION from by the following:

EMAIL: fcaaq.qc@gmail.com

TELEPHONE:

Michelle Lao (514) 482-5206 or (514) 466-5206

Franco Sevilla (514) 730-6015

Lene Catedrilla (514) 298-2478

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

L'Hiver en fête à Côte-des-Neiges :

A 9TH EDITION FULL OF ACTIVITIES FOR ALL!

Montreal, January 18th, 2017 – L'Hiver en fête à Côte-des-Neiges will be held Saturday, February 4th, from 1pm to 4 pm at Kent Park, located at the corner of Côte-des-Neiges Road and Kent Avenue. In case of bad weather, the event will be postponed to February 18th 2017.

This year, a unique program is offered as part of the 375th birthday of Montreal. All families are invited to have fun in the inflatables structures, dare playing soccer in bubbles or warm up dancing zumba and traditional local dances. As usual, several activities and games are organized by community agents, such as hockey, broomball, sports tournaments and a lot more! Everything will be nicely accompanied by hot drinks, snacks and maple toffee!

All of these activities are free for families.

Since 2008, this festive event allows the families to enjoy the beautiful winter days and helps them discover the joys of winter, and many activities they can reproduce throughout the cold season.

L'Hiver en fête à Côte-des-Neiges annually attracts more than 2,800 people and is organized by Corporation de Développement Communautaire Côte-des-Neiges, Table de Concertation Jeunesse CDN, Centre Communautaire de Loisir de la CDN, Baobab Familial, Loisirs Sportifs CDN-NDG, Maison des jeunes de CDN, MultiCaf, Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi CDN, Poste de quartier 26, Société environnementale de CDN, Centre communautaire Mountain Sights, PROMIS and Centre de ressources communautaires CDN, in collaboration with the Bourough CDN—NDG

Source and information :

Margaux Hoor

Organizing Committee 2017

514-872-5946



Filipino food to keep you warm



Beef Pochero
Ingredients
2 lbs beef short ribs or cubed sirloin
½ medium cabbage, quartered
1 bunch Bok choy (pechay)
1 bundle long green beans (about 15 pieces)
1 medium sized potato, cubed
2 large plantains(saba banana), sliced
3 pieces chorizo, sliced thinly
1 large tomato, diced
1 medium sized onion, diced
2 tbsp whole pepper corn
2 tbsp fish sauce
1 tsp garlic
1 small can tomato sauce
3 cups water
1 cup garbanzos
Instructions
Heat oil in the pot and fry the banana until color turns golden brown. Once done, set the bananas aside
Put in the chorizo in the same pot and fry for about 3 to 5 minutes then set aside
Sauté the garlic, onion, and tomato
Add the beef and cook for 5 minutes
Add the fish sauce, tomato sauce, and whole pepper corn and mix well
Add the water and simmer until meat is tender (about 35 minutes in pressure cooker)
Put-in the fried chorizo, fried banana, potato, and garbanzos and simmer for 7 minutes
Add the cabbage, long green beans and simmer for 5 minutes
Add the bok choy and turn off the heat. Cover the

Goto (Tripe)
Ingredients
1 cup uncooked rice
1 lb. ox tripe, cleaned
1 lb. pig large intestine, cleaned
4 eggs, boiled and shelled
5 cups water (for cooking)
6 cups water (for boiling)
2 teaspoons beef powder or 1 beef cube
1 teaspoon turmeric powder (optional)
2 tablespoons minced ginger
1 medium onion, minced
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons garlic powder
3 tablespoons cooking oil
1 head toasted garlic
¼ cup chopped green onion
½ cup crushed chicharon
Salt and pepper to taste
Instructions
Boil 6 cups of water in a deep cooking pot.
Add the ox tripe, pig intestine, and 1 teaspoon salt. Boil for 2 to 3 hours or until soft. Add water as needed. Remove the tripe and intestine from the pot to cool down and then slice into bite sized pieces. Set aside.
Heat the cooking oil in a deep cooking pot.
Saute the onion, ginger, and garlic. Once the onion is soft, add the tripe and intestine. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the beef powder(or cube), turmeric powder, and garlic powder. Pour-in the water. Stir and let boil. Add the rice. Allow the water to boil once more and then adjust the heat between low to medium. Cook for 30 to 45 minutes or until the desired texture is achieved. Add water if needed and stir every 5 minutes or so to prevent the rice from sticking on the pan. Add salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a serving bowl. Add egg and top with green onions, toasted garlic, and crushed chicharon. Serve.



Tinola (Chicken stew)
Ingredients
1 whole chicken, cut into serving pieces
36 ounces rice washing
½ pc small green papaya, cut into wedges
1 tbsp garlic, minced
1 medium sized onion, chopped
1 thumb ginger, cut into strips
2 tbsp fish sauce
Hot pepper leaves
Instructions
Sauté the garlic, onion, and ginger
Put-in the chicken and cook until color turns light brown
Add the fish sauce and mix well
Pour-in the rice washing and put to a boil. Simmer for 45 minutes.
Add the green papaya wedges and simmer for 5 minutes
Add the hot pepper leaves
Add salt and pepper to taste
Serve hot.



Chicken mami
Ingredients
2 lbs boneless chicken breasts
1 pack (8 oz) thin egg noodles, cooked according to package instructions
2 cups chopped Napa cabbage
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 cup chopped spring onion
1/4 cup toasted garlic
6 to 8 cups chicken broth (or combine 6 cups water and 1 ½ piece chicken cube)
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon salt
4 to 6 pieces boiled chicken egg
Carrot strips for garnish (optional)
Cooking Procedure
Pour-in chicken broth in a deep cooking pot. Bring to a boil.
Add chicken breasts, onion powder, salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Cover and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes. Note: add a little water if necessary.
Turn off heat. Remove the chicken breasts and slice as thin as possible. In a wide individual serving bowl, arrange the cooked noodles, chopped Napa cabbage, carrot strips, boiled egg, chicken, spring onions, and toasted garlic. Pour-in the hot broth. Serve. Share and enjoy!



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Happy Valentine's Day

The North American FILIPINO STAR PHOTO GALLERY



BANGON BICOLANDIA -Top photo of some of the guests, volunteers and organizers, lower left - Tenne Rose Dayandante and Michael Davantes introducing the entertainment numbers, and lower right photo with Vilma Kelly greeting the audience.



Filipino-Canadian community leaders watching the talent show



Councilor Peter McQueen poses with the organizers and volunteers



Organizers of Atitihan Festival headed by Sally Carrillo (5th from left) with MMTV reporter, Fely Rosales and Executive Producer, Zenaida Kharroubi, after the event on Saturday, January 22, 2017 at St. Kevin Church Hall.



Steve Austin and Mary Joy Lizarondo (1st and 2nd from the left) with Zenaida Kharroubi and her international students, Katrina Cempron and Ariel Galvez, before the couple's trip to the Philippines last December 2016.



French class of international students - Dana Kirstie Perolino, Ariel Galvez, Mary Ann Go, Erleen Bureros and Clyde Sedurifa - at Gilmore College International on Cote des Neiges Road in Montreal.



Mary Joy Lizarondo poses for souvenir with Zenaida Kharroubi in front of the Sto. Nino personalized calendar that her sister Ana Lizarondo sent as a gift in 2008 to show that this gift is very well appreciated.

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Rotrand Wants Action Before Opioid Crisis Engulfs Montreal and Quebec

January 23, 2017 Communiqué

Councillor Marvin Rotrand, Chef par Interim of Coalition Montreal, will tell City Council in Question Period this afternoon that Montreal and the province of Quebec are unlikely to avoid the opioid drug crisis that is killing thousands across North America.

"In the United States there were 33000 overdose deaths due to opioids in 2015 according to the American Society of Addiction Medicine. For the first time ever there were more overdose deaths than traffic accident fatalities and fentanyl was the culprit in most cases. In British Columbia and Alberta there is a veritable public health crisis with more than 1000 deaths in 2016," says Rotrand

Fentanyl is an opioid drug which is 40 times stronger than heroin and between 50 and 100 times more potent than morphine. The drug has been linked to dozens of overdoses and several deaths across Quebec and Canada in the last two years. Moreover recently even more dangerous opioids such as Carfentanyl, 10,000 times more potent than morphine, have made an appearance in North America,

Rotrand pointed out that a few months ago Quebec City police made arrests and confiscated \$1.5 million worth of fentanyl pills. An increasing number of overdose deaths in Quebec have a fentanyl connection and just before New Years police discovered and raided an illicit drug lab producing fentanyl capsules.

Rotrand will make three demands in Council:

Digong's Feats

By Rey O. Arcilla
Malaya

Duterte-and-Xi-Putin WHO could blame President Rodrigo Roa Duterte aka Digong for his strident remarks against the outgoing Obama administration in Washington?

US State Department spokesperson Mark Toner confirmed last week that criticisms and actions taken by Washington against the Duterte administration on its war against illegal drugs were merely based on unconfirmed allegations!

Below is a reprint of excerpts from Toner's press briefing on January 12:

"QUESTION: Okay. And then the other issue that Senator Rubio and some others pressed him on was the Philippines —

MR. TONER: Yes.

QUESTION: — and whether or not President Duterte and his government have committed human rights abuses in their war against narcotics and other drugs. And again, as with — in the case of Russia and Syria, Mr. Tillerson said he was not — he didn't have enough information to make that determination. Has this Administration, this building, made a firm determination that, in fact, human rights abuses are being committed



Councillor Marvin Rotrand

1. That the City anticipate a public health crisis and set up a working table with the Department de Sante Communautaire, community organisations and the police department to have preventative strategies ready before the opioid epidemic strikes Montreal and Quebec.

2. That the City formally support via a City Council motion Bill C-37 tabled December 12, 2016 by Federal Health Minister Jane Philpott aimed to making it easier to open safe injection sites and harder to smuggle fentanyl and other opioids into Canada.

3. That the City urge Quebec to follow Ontario's lead to cease public health coverage of higher strength medication through its Ontario Drug Benefit program.

"If we are pro-active we will save lives," says Rotrand.

- 30 -

info: Marvin Rotrand

in the Philippines in this war on drugs?

MR. TONER: So, no. We are very concerned by reports of extrajudicial killings by or at the behest of the Philippine — or government authorities in the Philippines. And we have called for thorough and transparent investigations into these allegations, these credible allegations — any allegation of extrajudicial killings, we believe, and strongly urge the Philippine authorities to ensure that its law enforcement's — law enforcement officials act in a way that's consistent with international norms and laws.

But we have not made a determination yet that this is indeed what's happening."

Denunciation and virtual condemnation of Digong's war againsts illegal drugs based on allegations?! Against a supposed "special" friend?! Sino ang hindi magagalit n'yan?

Mr. Rex Tillerson, President-elect Donald Trump's nominee for Secretary of State, said during his confirmation hearing in the US Senate that he needs more information on the human rights situation in the Philippines before making a judgment on it.

"You're asking me to make a decision based on information I have heard today... I want to see the factual basis based on statistics and factual evidence based on who is committing," Tillerson said.

Ontario to stop paying for high-dose opioids in push to reduce addiction

By Nicole Thompson The Canadian Press

TORONTO — Ontario will be the first province to stop paying for high doses of long-acting opioids as part of a push to reduce the "growing problem" of addiction to the painkillers in the province.

The Ministry of Health said that in January 2017, high doses of the painkillers will be removed from the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, which covers the cost of drugs for people who are 65 or older, live in a long-term care home, receive social assistance or have high drug costs relative to their income.

It's a decision that Dr. David Juurlink, head of the division of clinical pharmacology and toxicology at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, said is a "good move" on the government's part because it may discourage doctors from prescribing unnecessarily high doses of the drugs.

"We're starting to see doctors prescribe them somewhat less regularly, but they are still used very, very often. And, I think, too often," he said.

READ MORE: Opioids kill hundreds of Canadians a year. Why are doctors still prescribing so many?

The affected drugs include 200-milligram tablets of morphine, 24-milligram and 30-milligram capsules of hydromorphone and 75-microgram per hour and 100-microgram per hour patches of fentanyl. But the change doesn't affect lower doses of the drugs, which the ministry said can actually be more effective than high doses.

Ontario's Health Minister said in a written statement that delisting the drugs is an "important first step" in limiting high doses of opioids, which he noted are linked to overdose deaths. A recent study showed that Ontario provincial inmates are 12 times more likely than the general public to die of a drug overdose within the first year following their release from incarceration, and 77 per cent of those deaths involved opioids.

Dr. Tara Gomes, who works at St. Michael's Hospital and is a principal

Moreover, he said he will rely on multiple sources before making a conclusion on the matter.

Could it be that the State Department boys and girls are now trying to adjust to the emerging apparent approach of dealing with the Philippines by the incoming Trump administration? That would appear to be the case.

He has his faults. Who doesn't? But no matter how one looks at it, there is no way s/he can belittle Digong's accomplishments in promoting the national interest, especially in our relations with the big powers.

researcher for the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, said that these high doses of opioids can get people addicted — and even cause an overdose — with just one use.

Gomes was the lead author of a 2014 study that found Ontario dispensed the most high-dose oxycodone and fentanyl in the country per capita between 2006 and 2011. The study showed that across the country, the rate of dispensing high-dose opioids rose 23 per cent over the same period.

READ MORE: Number of B.C. fentanyl-related deaths spikes in first half of 2016

Juurlink, who was also an author on the study, said opioid addiction reaches beyond just Ontario and Canada. He said the over-prescription of high doses of the drugs is "a North American issue."

Prescribing high doses of the drugs is particularly problematic because drug addicts and people looking to "make a buck" by selling their prescriptions are more likely to look for higher concentrations, he said.

But he noted that there are some legitimate uses for high doses, like in end-of-life care.

"I've heard grumblings (about the announcement), mostly from the palliative care communities," he said. But he noted that doctors who need to prescribe a higher dose can instruct their patients to scale up the number of pills they take.

He said the same could be done for patients who don't necessarily need high doses, but that this move may encourage doctors think critically about why they prescribe such high dosages.

And Gomes noted that the high dosages will still be available in the province — they just won't be refunded to patients under the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, so patients will have to pay out of pocket or use insurance to buy them.

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He has succeeded in improving our ties with China, Japan and Russia where others before him have failed .

According to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez and Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez, in just three months Digong was able to raise about \$9 billion each from China and Japan in Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Digong also obtained \$24 billion in aid pledges from China while Japanese conglomerate Marubeni pledged to invest \$17.2 billion in the water, power and

See Page 19 - Digong's Feat



Social

Fely Rosales Cariño



Winter is beautiful! When it's sunny, snow glistens, and after a windstorm, tree branches are wrapped with ice from top to bottom. Now, we are in the deep of winter. Children love it but seniors hate it or let's say tolerate it. Nevertheless, the snow hasn't abated parties. As a matter of fact, there are more reasons to party. Every Filipino Association holds a Christmas party. Sometimes we are invited to 2 or 3 in one night! Just ask MMTV Program Manager Al Abdon and cameramen Ed Ujuvary and DC Sebellita.

Then there's the inevitable politics. We are saturated with everything about election South of the Border. We are informed about the good and the bad political happenings in the Philippines. Then there is the ever present "bickering" in local Filipino politics. But all of the above make our lives worthwhile. They set our minds to have something to think about. Otherwise, life would be boring, don't you agree?

Last November 3, 2016, there was a "Town Hall Meeting" held at the 6767 Community Center at Cote des Neiges, Montreal. This was organized by Mr. James de la Paz, Mr. Jerry Danzil, and Mr. Felix De Luna, all community leaders in Montreal. This meeting was on short notice but because of its importance, many attended just by word of mouth. This was a forum with the Deputy Cabinet Secretary of the Philippines, Honourable Peter T. Lavina. He was introduced by Honourable Petronila Garcia, the Philippine Ambassador to Canada. Honourable Lavina made a presentation about the economic and social stability of the Philippines under President Rodrigo Duterte. His presentation was followed by a "Question and Answer" period. There were very interesting questions from the audience and Honourable Lavina answered them as well as he could. There was an observation that more questions were going to be asked but there was no more time. Ms. Joecel Trinidad of Canadian Pinoy Radio, the moderator, told the audience that there might be some more forums like this next time.

Seniors on a Roll: The United Pilipino Seniors (UPS) under President Warly Basbacio held their monthly social and Christmas party, last Dec 12, 2016 at the St. Kevin Social Hall. As usual, there was the parade of colors (performed by Claire Boco and Linda Danzil, Damilo Valdez, Rudy Oliver and Mario Bajar). This was followed by the singing of national anthems by Dolly Brouillette and invocation by Ella Rajes. Mrs.

Basbacio welcomed the guests after which Merle Valiente, former UPS president, presented the 22 birthday celebrants for November and 16 for December. WOW! Lot's of hugs and handshakes!

Two other organizations elected their set of offices recently. The Center of Social Development and Assistance (CSDA) celebrated the induction of their officers at 6767 Community Center recently. Elected were: Anineah Gadia (President), Macrina Alcantara (Vice President), Josephine Raza (Secretary), Elizabeth Ladera (Assistant Secretary), Victor Marshall (Treasurer/Auditor), Evangeline Castillo and Francisca Agmata (Cultural Affairs Coordinators), Marilou Agacid (Administrator), and Noemi Agraan (Executive Director). After their induction into office, they were interviewed by yours truly of MMTV. Those interviewed expressed their reasons for forming their association.

The United Pilipino Seniors of Quebec (UPS) INC. under President William Fabia proclaimed the following members of the Executive Board at a gathering held at the FAMAS Center recently. Executive Board members are: William Fabia (President), Merly Nunez (VP Internal), Rosario Canivel (VP External), Elvira Balagot (Secretary), Erlinda Lopez (Assistant Secretary), Suzette Olivares (Treasurer), Florinda E. Uy (Assistant Treasurer), Rosita Sumunod (Assistant Auditor), Luciana Bulchand (P.R.O), Estelita Torio (Asst. P.R.O), Priscilla D. Andal (Business Manager), Melania Anore (Assistant Business Manager), Clemente Bernardo (Peace Officer), Felia Estrada (Deputy Peace Officer).

The FAMAS Center was full to capacity, standing room only. I noticed that the sweetest smiles that night belonged to Nene Fabia and Merly Nunez. Anybody who is willing to serve the community in any capacity is admirable and deserves respect. They deserve their names to be published too. Congratulations to all of the above Executive Board Members!

With Bing Estopa as Chairman of the recent Quebec Association of Canadian Filipino Teachers (QACFT) President Trans Liganor just has to let the DJ play "Ang Pasko ay Sumapit" and the "Little Drummer Boy" to put everyone into Christmas festive mood. Children's games consumed most of the time but this didn't prevent the line dancers from displaying their graceful moves.

The Seniors of West Island and Suburbs (SWIS) held their Christmas party at Casa Greque in the West Island. Co-emcees Benny Bote and yours truly greeted the guests. After Cora Zarate led the invocation, the SWIS choir with Nita Advincula as conductor sang Christmas carols. Mr. Frank Baylis (MP, DDO-Pierrefonds) gave his inspirational message after having been introduced by SWIS board member Lydia Fielding. Highlight of the program was the dance presentation (lovely and funny) choreographed by Mrs. Lita Bote. The dance floor was always full as the music by J-Den Sounds was excellent. The DJ always makes the party good - thanks Dennis! SWIS chairman Roger Ajero couldn't contain his contented smile at a party well enjoyed!

At this point, Christmas is over. For a change let's feel patriotic now. This is best brought out last Dec. 30, 2016 when the Knights of Rizal, Montreal chapter, celebrated the 120th Death Anniversary and Martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal, our national hero. This was held at the Singapore Room of Ruby Foo's Hotel on Decarie, Montreal. Messages came from important personalities starting from Hon. Petronila Garcia, the Philippine Ambassador to Canada to the Order of the Knights Supreme Council of Canada headed by Sir Edward Prillo, KGOR, Regional Commander, Canadian Region, Sir Dario Boco, KGOR Area commander, Eastern Canada, Sir Felix de Luna, KGOR, Chapter commander, Montreal, Quebec, Sir Jerry Danzil, KCR, Deputy Chapter commander, Montreal, and Sir Bert Abiera, KGOR.

Their program started with the singing of the National Anthems followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by Sir Gerry

Danzil. Chapter Commander Sir Felix de Luna welcomed the guests. The highlight of the celebration was the dramatization of the play "Huling Paalam" directed by Sir Rowel Pangilinan. Before the play, Lady Fatima Deguetera sang "Ang Bayan Kong Minamahal". Cast members were: Lady Luz Domingo (Rizal's Mother, Teodora Alonso), Lady Delia Daniel (Sister Trinidad), Lady Leonita Gattoc (Sister Narcisa), Lady Cherry Palmos (Sister Josefa), Lady Linda Danzil (Sister Maria), Lady Elena Balaus (Wife of Rizal, Josephine Bracken), Sir Ben Balaus, KCR, LM (Dr. Jose Rizal), Sir Willy Pasion, KCR, LM (Father Balaguer), Sir Reggie Villamor, KCR (Dr. Felipe Ruiz Castillo), Sir Boy Zacarias, KCR, LM (Captain Rafael Dominguez), and the Soldiers (Platoon Leader - Sir Jolas Bueno, KOR - Sir Ali Ansagay, KOR, Sir Jun Torico, KOR, Sir Patrick Gotera, KCR, LM, Sir Posadas, KR, Sir Ramon Posadas, KOR, LM, Sir Dan Azuelo, Sir Lito Laxamana, KOR, and Sir James Menzi, KCR, LM.). Group Singing of Bayan Ko was performed by all Knights of Rizal, followed by the audience.

Federation News: Federation President Ed Tupas informed the Filipino Star that the Seniors' Outreach Program is presently being conducted by Mr. Al Abdon at 6767 Cote des Neiges. The ongoing session started Jan 9, and ends Feb 2, 2017. This is now the 6th session; the 7th session will soon follow. Seniors who want to be computer literate can join the classes free of charge. Classes are held at the above address.

Watch out for Valentine parties from different Filipino associations! See you then!

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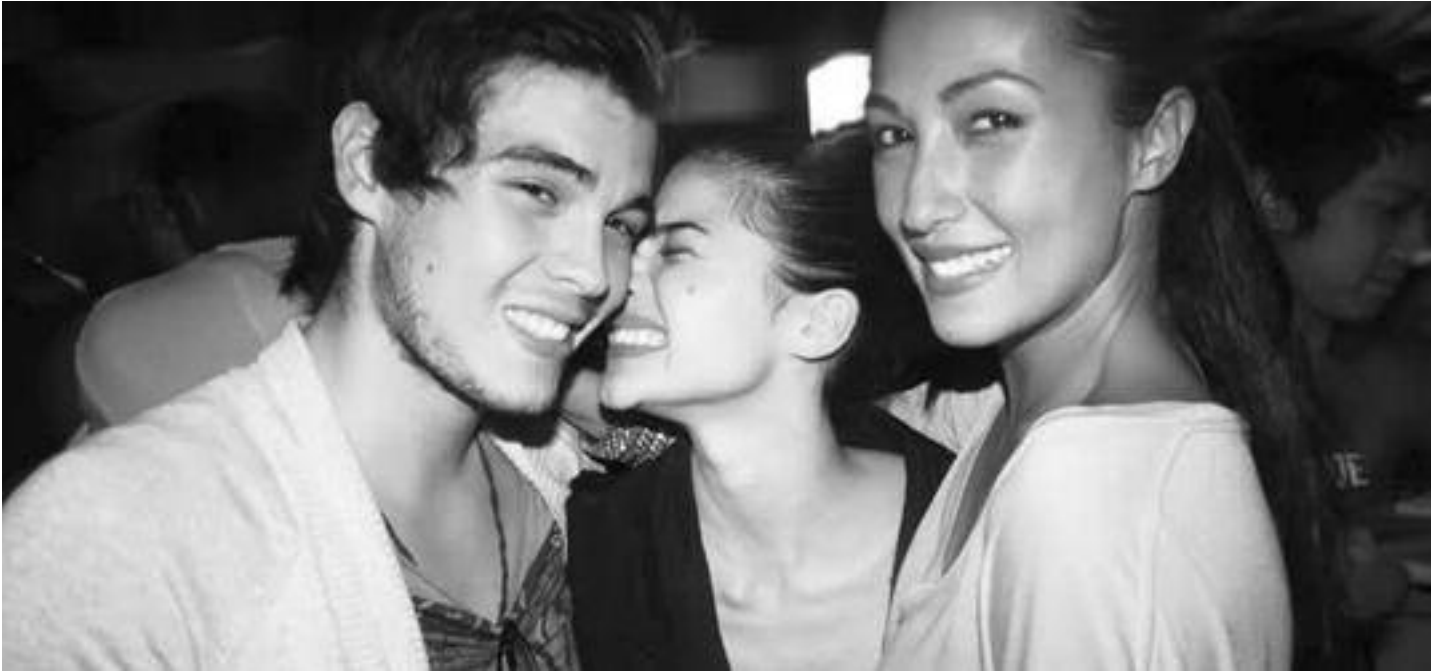
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FILIPINO STAR

SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Solenn and Erwan Heussaff on growing up as fat kids: ‘It was not an easy journey’



Left to right: Erwan Heussaff, Anne Curtis, Solenn Heussaff

As one of the two fittest celebrities in the country, Solenn and Erwan Heussaff admitted they weren't always living the healthiest lifestyle while growing up. "I was big when I was small and it was not an easy journey for the two of us and we did it so anyone else can do it din. It's nice to be an inspiration," Solenn said.

Now that they have been asked to endorsed a product together, Erwan admitted they felt very honored to be approached by the energy drink brand. "I think when we started working with Milo we thought it was really cool because usually they only talk to athletes and Solenn and I are definitely not athletes. But we really love to work out and we were both fat kids growing up. It feels great to have people kind of go up to you and say, 'You know you pushed me to work out. I go to the gym now because of you or I lost weight because of you,'" he shared during the Milo Nutri Up Your Game event held last January 21 in Makati city.

Erwan said family played a big role in helping him get fitter after his fat kid phase. "I think family is part of your best support system. When you're trying to be fit or trying to lose weight or trying to work out more, it's really important to have someone there for you. We're pretty blessed because we come from a family that is extremely active. My dad is 72 and he still works out. My mom does a lot of sports and yoga. So we all push each other to kind of be better versions of ourselves," he explained.

Solenn said that growing up she and Erwan did not have any sibling rivalry that caused any big fights. "He thinks he's better at some things. Of course naman lalake pa rin

siya so he has stronger points. I have stronger points din like core, siya mas sa legs and endurance," she added.

The celebrity siblings also enjoy different workouts with Solenn likes to do a mix of boxing and yoga while Erwan prefers more of outdoor activities. "I enjoy run sprinting, swimming, and CrossFit just because it moves everything and diet-wise I try to eat everything as naturally as possible," he explained.

This year, the Heussaffs hope to set their highest personal fitness goals. "I just turned 30 so I really want this year to kind of be my fittest year ever. Just because I do feel like I'm getting slightly slower, things are harder to do, in terms of just how your body changes. So I really want this year to kind of be like my strongest and most disciplined year ever. It's 2017 so we thought the best way to kind of start the year was to try to inspire people to be healthier and to lead a healthier lifestyle. We're big fans of the product and we just really want to push people to have this year as their strongest year possible. Nowadays, everyone is on their phone, head down, and always answering emails and texts and stuff like that so working out is one of those activities where you can't physically hold on to your phone while working out so it's one time you get to connect to other people when you're partnering yourself," Erwan shared.

Now that Solenn is married, younger brother Erwan said nothing much has changed with his sister. "None really. Nothing's really changed. She's just as determined as she used to be. And in terms of relationship nothing's changed at all. Actually I'm closer to her husband than I am to my sister (laughs). I

should have married Nico not her," he said jokingly. Solenn admitted married life was not a big adjustment for her. "We were living in before we got married so wala talagang naiba. And the good thing with Nico he's also really sporty and really competitive so he always competes with Erwan, they always try to one up each other. And with me naman, he comes with me in yoga. Since I can do something better than him he can't accept it (laughs),"



Throwback Family photo

she added.

Another thing the siblings have in common is that they are both not big fans of celebrating Valentine's day. "I hate Valentine's (laughs). I'm not into it. I find that if you love someone you should love him all throughout the year and not just on one day," she said. ■

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Sunshine so radiant

The actress looks luminous as she strides forward following heartbreak gone public



Sunshine Dizon

Sunshine Dizon is now in a good place after dropping the charges she filed in court against her estranged husband.

"It was hard, it was painful, but I have two kids and they need their father," she said of her decision.

The actress made clear, though, "My fight doesn't end there."

Asked to clarify, she retorted, "I don't want to talk about it at this point, but I will make sure you'll hear about it."



Sunshine with estranged husband Timothy Tan (file photo)

At the moment, the actress is busy with "Ika-6 Na Utos," a soap airing on GMA that for many people, seems to echo her real-life situation.

Well, does it?

"Siguro may similarities ng konti pero it wasn't patterned naman after my life story. Ibang-iba naman itong palabas na ito."

"Ika-6 Na Utos" has Sunshine playing the role of Emma, a wife fighting to keep her husband who has entered into a relationship with another woman.

"I took on the role simply

because it's challenging," Sunshine said, noting, "Out-of-the-box characters ang hilig ko talagang gampanan kahit dati pa."

That said, the actress pointed out she is far removed from Emma.

"Sa totoo lang there are times that I feel like I want to tell her, 'Emma 'wag kang tanga,'" she said with a laugh. "Pero, of course, it's a soap and we just have to do our jobs."

Busy, baby

Sunshine and other key cast members took part in this year's Sinulog Festival in Cebu. She looked radiant throughout the jaunt, seemingly unmindful of the frenzied timetable that includes mall shows and interviews.

"Honestly, I like it that I'm busy," she shared. "Kasi I have my bad days, where, I'm like so depressed that I feel like I don't want get out of my bed. But because of work, I get to push myself to go out there and just, you know, have fun."

"I simply choose to be positive kasi," she added. "Of course, hindi ako robot na walang nararamdaman but I choose to use my energy wisely. Yes, I still have lots of questions in my head but I tell myself that everything happens for a reason and that God has a plan for me so I just hold on to that and smile."

The 33-year old enjoys hobnobbing with fans, whom she deems "loyal and supportive."

"Lalo na sa social media,

they make an effort talaga to make me feel how much they love me, how much they support me. It feels good kasi, somehow, I don't feel like I'm alone sa pinagdadaan ko and I'm grateful for that."

Sunshine considers "Ika-6

Na Utos" a blessing as it lends a voice to suffering wives.

"Actually, it's heartbreaking to read some of the comments they post," the actress said. "To know that I somehow inspire them makes the hard work worthwhile."

Smashing

Of late, Sunshine has been receiving much praise for looking svelte. However, she downplayed notions losing weight is an effect of or her way of coping with heartbreak.

"Naku hindi, coincidental lang talaga," Sunshine shared. "I did it for myself. To be honest, okay pa kami (ng husband) ko when I signed to (BeloMedical Clinic's) program."

With some saying she looks more than ready to find new love, Sunshine simply smiled and said, "Wala pa sa isip ko 'yan sa ngayon." "Not naman na I'm closing my doors na permanently on the possibility but I really am not thinking about it. Focus muna talaga ako sa children ko."

But what if Cupid comes knocking anew anyway?

"I really don't know," Sunshine said, rather enigmatically. "I guess, I will just have to cross that bridge when I get there." ■

Why James, Nadine fought during movie premiere night



Remember the video of James Reid and Nadine Lustre arguing during the premier night of "Wang Fam" back in 2015? Now it can be told what really happened that night.

The two revealed what really happened in an interview on the late night show "Gandang Gabi Vice" Sunday.

According to Lustre, they started arguing because she came in late for the movie premiere, not knowing that everyone was waiting for her and Reid before they start showing the movie.

"Na-late kami parehas, pero

nauna siyang dumating. So pagdating ko dun, galit na galit siya. 'Yun pala kasi inaantay na dumating kami bago mag-start," she said.

"So, galit ako. And I said, 'I hope it's worth it.' Kasi I felt embarrassed that everyone was waiting for us in the cinema. They wouldn't play the movie until we got there so I felt embarrassed for both of us," Reid added.

The two consider the argument a turning point in their relationship, first as merely an onscreen love team, then as a real-life couple. ■

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.15***Richard Gutierrez, Sarah Lahbati sizzle in Fiji****“Beautiful day at secret island here in Fiji” - Sarah Lahbati (Instagram)**

Summer came early for celebrity couple Richard Gutierrez and Sarah Lahbati as they flew to Fiji

with their son, Zion, for a family vacation.

A video posted by Lahbati

on Instagram showed not only Fiji's pristine beach but also the couple's public display of affection.

Here are other photos of the family's holiday in a "secret island in Fiji." ■

Iza Calzado channels Imelda Marcos, draws flak**Iza Calzado as Imelda Marcos**

Actress Iza Calzado was surprised to see so many negative comments on her social media pages hours after she shared photos of her

channeling Imelda Marcos, the wife of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, at a costume party.

Calzado recently attended

the birthday party of socialite and host Tim Yap as Mrs. Marcos, with the actress clad in a deep blue terno.

In a series of Twitter posts on

Sunday, Calzado made it clear that she does not idolize Mrs. Marcos, who is known for her lavish lifestyle despite the nation's poverty during the two-decade reign of her husband.

“Just opened my Twitter to find that there are so many harsh comments about my Imelda posts. Did you guys even read my caption?” she began.

“I never stated that I idolize Imelda. I clearly stated that I channeled a part of her, which I resonate with, love for shoes and terno. And yes, I said I would love to play Imelda in a film because it is very interesting to me, as an actor, to try and wrap my head around the character, the person which is Imelda. Just because I want to play her means I put her on a pedestal,” she explained.

Calzado said she feels sad that “in today's society, people have become so divided, politically, that they've become so opinionated and sensitive.”

“Opinionated and sensitive about everything... even a party costume! Is this the kind of society we want? A greatly divided nation? Yes, we must never forget our history but we should also live in the present and look towards a bright future. A unified future,” she said.

Nevertheless, the actress apologized to all those who felt offended by her costume of choice.

“Kung may nasaktan man ako, patawad. Again, my intention was never to hurt or offend you. This will be my last tweet about this. Peace,” she ended. ■

Sarah Geronimo back to work after grand vacation



Sarah Geronimo

Pop star Sarah Geronimo is definitely on a roll as she embarks on several projects in 2017 after being away from the show-biz scene recharging herself for two months on a grand vacation.

Her manager, Viva Films' Vicente "Vic" del Rosario Jr. said the singer/actress is now more energized than ever to carry out her commitments.

"Naka-recharge na siya, enjoy na uli siyang magtrabaho (She's now recharged, and ready to work again)," Boss Vic, as he is known in the industry, said.

"Nag-enjoy siya sa bakasyon, nakapahinga (She enjoyed her vacation, and she is

rested). Since 2003 puro trabaho ang ginawa ni Sarah. Kaya tama lang na nagbakasyon siya (Since 2003, all she had done was work. So, it was just right that she should go on vacation)," Del Rosario added.

For a start, her fans will be in for a "kilig" (thrill) overload as Geronimo is set to do a reunion movie with box-office king John Lloyd Cruz.

She is also set for a major concert in November.

To this day, the 28-year-old singer/actress slays 30 product endorsements and counting. She's also set to record a new album and will be back to host The Voice Teens.

Boy on parting ways with Kris: It's nothing new



It might take a very long time before we see Boy Abunda and Kris Aquino on TV together, after close to 16 years being close to inseparable on-air.

But for Boy, whose successful patented Fast Talk-style talk show Tonight With Boy Abunda is celebrating its first year anniversary, said such goodbyes are nothing new, and that their friendship off-cam will always remain.

"We are always together. As a matter of fact, 30 minutes from now I'll be with her. So the conversation off cam continues," Boy tells PUSH in an exclusive interview.

There have been times they went on separate ways professionally after their programs were cancelled or reformatted. However, this is the first time in nearly two decades that one of them would depart to join a new network.

According to Boy, there were no ill feelings or hurt despite talk that he had been out of the loop in Kris' conversations with her now co-manager Tony P. Tuviera, president and CEO of TAPE, Inc., producer of Eat Bulaga!. Kris had agreed to terms with TAPE for a show to air on GMA-7.

"This is nothing new. This is not a strange concept to us. We've had our goodbyes in the past but not as friends. I still do her contracts. We are still in constant communication with each other," Boy said.



Boy noted how he and Kris enjoyed their ride together as co-hosts through the years, particularly their last project on ABS-CBN, Aquino and Abunda Tonight.

"It was very nice, it was very exciting. We can read each other's aura," Boy said. Even the concept of Tonight With Boy Abunda, he said, was something he shared collaboratively with Kris.

"Even before we did Aquino and Abunda Tonight, it was our plan to do a '15 Minutes with Boy Abunda.' So she knew from the very start that it was material that I was thinking about. And of course it became convenient for us to do a show together," Boy revealed.

What was special about his 1-year-old talk show was its pace, he said.

"It's very loose, it's very fluid. I can open and say anything I want. I like the quickness of the interviews. And of course the brand equity of the interviews, which is the Fast Talk I invented. It's the brevity."

Boy said that after one year, the show will be introducing changes but will retain its "core."

"The changes are massive. Lalo na in the context of viewing preferences. So we will certainly continue to listen to opinions, to preferences while retaining to the core of what we think that needs to be done," he noted. ■

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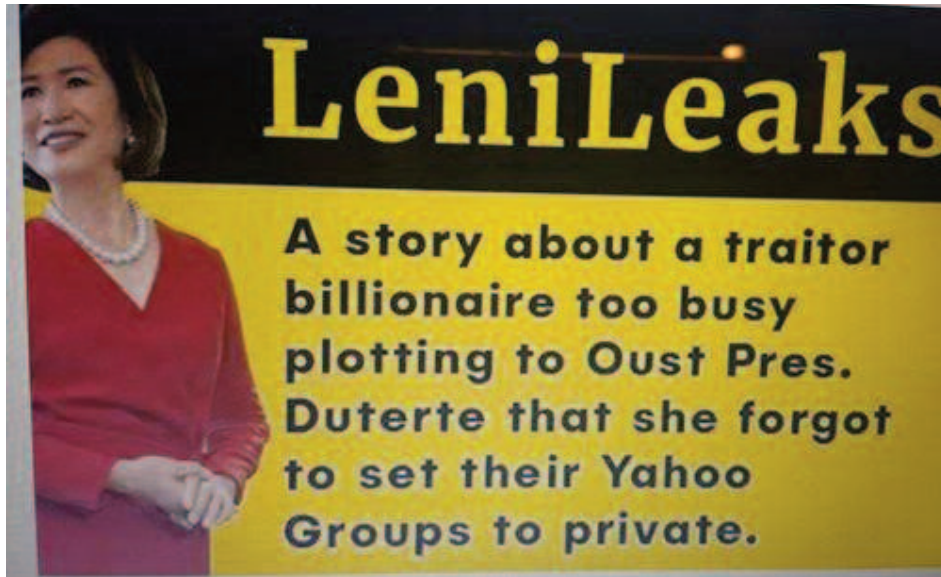
LeniLeaks and the Andanar Obsession

January 19, 2017 | Opinion

By Rodel E. Rodis

plan to oust the President by January 2017," Andanar said in the news article.

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/145518/>



LeniLeaks.Christmas is still more than 11 months away but I have already been inundated with emails, phone calls and Facebook messages from friends begging to be invited to my next Christmas party all thanks to the "LeniLeaks" charge of Pres. Duterte's Communications Secretary Martin Andanar that the Christmas party at my San Francisco home on December 22, 2016 was the setting of a sinister plot to oust Pres. Duterte.

no-fil-am-plot-to-oust-duterte

NEW TARGET: SAN FRANCISCO FIL-AMS

Andanar's new target this time around is clear in the "breaking news" article of Duterte supporter John "Boboy" Shinn III, editor of the L.A. Zamboanga Times, who posted "exclusive photos" of Loida Nicolas Lewis and an "anti-Duterte group" attending a Christmas party in San Francisco.



Martin Andanar

In his January 7, 2017 "Mancave" podcast entitled "Leni Leaks: Truth or Lies", Andanar accused New York philanthropist and community leader Loida Nicolas Lewis of mobilizing Filipino Americans in San Francisco to call for the resignation of Duterte in order to benefit Vice President Leni Robredo.

Andanar had previously drawn the front page banner headline of the Philippine Star on September 20, 2016 when he charged that "some Filipino-Americans in New York are hatching a plan to oust President Duterte by January 2017" ("Oust Duterte drive hatched in New York – Andanar").

But his propaganda campaign against Fil-Ams in New York fizzled then because it was based on pure hearsay. "I was just talking to somebody in New York now who is also a member of the Cabinet – I won't mention his name. But he also heard of the Fil-Ams in New York who are planning. They are hatching a

Here is Shinn's report which was widely shared with Duterte supporters in the social media on January 7, 2017, the day after Andanar's podcast:

"LOS ANGELES — A Loida Nicolas Lewis-inspired group of Filipino-Americans met in San Francisco, California, USA with a get-together December 22, 2016 at the residence of Atty. Rodel Rodis in San Francisco, California which was attended by Loida Nicolas-Lewis, Inquirer columnist Randy David, Inquirer reporter Benjamin Pimentel, Greg Macabenta, Inquirer columnists Atty. Ted Laguatan and Atty. Rodel Rodis, who hosted the party.

It was also during this gathering that the group launched Filipino Americans for Human Rights Alliance (FAHRA), another lobby group in Loida Nicolas Lewis' campaign to oust democratically-elected Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte.

From the looks of it all, the Inquirer is leading the oust Duterte campaign in the U.S. with the financial help and guidance of Lewis and her network of connections in the U.S. news media and the Democratic Party."

Boboy Shinn, whose day job is listed as "paparazzi photographer", claimed that he had obtained the "exclusive" photos at my Christmas party. In truth, Shinn lifted the photos from my Facebook page which I posted on the night of the Christmas party.

Shinn also falsely reported the attendance of Inquirer columnists Randy David and Benjamin Pimentel at my Christmas party to support his lie that "from the looks of it", the Inquirer is behind the ouster plot.

While there were Superior Court judges, Catholic priests and Protestant pastors as well as presidents of local Filipino community organizations who are members of the Filipino American Human Rights Alliance (FAHRA) who were at my Christmas party, Prof. Randy David and Benjamin Pimentel were not among them.

INQUIRER COLUMNISTS NOT AT PARTY

In his Facebook post on January 8, Pimentel wrote:

"For the record: I am not part of a U.S.-based group (supposedly led by Loida Nicolas Lewis whom I've never met) seeking to oust the fascist Philippine president who instigated the bloodbath that has so far killed more than 5,000 people.

I also was not at a Christmas Party of said group that is conspiring to depose a leader who openly brags about killing people without due process. Said party was held at the home of Rodel Rodis. He did not invite me □

To the alleged plotters working to overthrow a president who once joked about raping a female hostage and who is now begging Putin to be his protector, could you schedule the next Christmas party on a weekend please, not the middle of the week? Will we have to bring a gift?"

Pimentel's Facebook friend, John Gershman, responded to his post with this advice: "Dude. You need to shift your work schedule to be more available so that conspiracy theorists can more

accurately place you in places you aren't."

Another Facebook friend, Vivian Araullo, told Pimentel that she was at the Christmas party but heard no discussions about overthrowing Duterte. "Maybe the coup was being plotted in between karaoke singing and lechon?" she surmised.

In his January 8, 2017 Inquirer column (Public Lives: The "conspiracy" to oust Duterte), Prof. Randy David wrote about receiving an angry email from a "former avid fan" who asked him if he was "part of the team to oust President Duterte".

David investigated the source of the rant and learned that it referred to a November 12, 2016 "email addressed to me and a couple of other people I know, written by an old UP friend from the '60s, Ted Laguatan, a vigorous human rights campaigner against the Marcos dictatorship and now a prominent US-based immigration lawyer. In that letter, he was basically proposing the organization of "mass protests against Duterte's extrajudicial killings and Marcos burial." Vintage Ted, I thought to myself. Young people were already busy organizing around these issues long before anyone could tell them.... Having just read it, I can say in all honesty that I found no reference to, or any intimation of, any plan to resort to extraconstitutional means to oust President Duterte."

Business World columnist Greg Macabenta can attest to the absence of Pimentel and David at my Christmas party because he was there "and so were many other prominent Filipino Americans who have been openly condemning the burial of the late President Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayani and have been bitterly protesting Duterte's anti-drug campaign — a campaign that has made accusers, judges, and executioners out of unidentified vigilantes and members of the Philippine National Police," he wrote.

Shinn's fake news article was disseminated by Sass Rogando Sassot and Mocha Uson, the "generals" in Duterte's vast online army of trolls who were enlisted by Andanar to go after Loida Lewis and Filipino Americans opposed to Duterte.

DUTERTE'S ARMY OF TROLLS

In Mocha Uson's youtube directive to her Duterte army of trolls, she paused to read an email message to her purportedly from

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Empire of the Son, a must see play

W.G. Quiambao

“Exquisite. I’m telling all the people I love most to see the show ... I can’t say enough good things about the Empire of the Son “ – Colin Thomas, - The Georgia Straight. “ I could not help but hear incredible amount of talk this work generated after its sold out debut in Vancouver last year. In Empire of the Son, the personal becomes magic “ – Jillian Keilex – Artistic Director, NAC English Theatre.”

Above are some of the rave reviews that Empire of the Son received.

Produced by the Vancouver Asian Canadians Theatre, the play was shown from Jan. 11 to to Jan. 14 at the Centaur Theatre. It will be shown again from Jan. 18 to 29 at the Factory Theatre in Toronto.

Empire of the Son made history by selling out before a single review was written: originally premiered in Vancouver’s second largest presenting theatres.

Empire of the Son is based on the experience of Tetsuro Shigematsu, a former CBC broadcaster. In the play, he explores how languages, history and similarity between his father and him kept them apart. Like many men of his generation and culture, the older Shigematsu kept his emotions under wraps, never talking with or hugging his son or telling him he loved him.

“We never touched each other, but when he was dying, we became intimate in terms of my cleaning him, changing his diaper.”

Shigematsu says he did not cry over his father’s death, something his own



Tetsuro Shigematsu in his one-man show Empire of the Son. RAYMOND SHUM)

young children noticed. They asked him if he had ever wept as an adult and the truth was, he did not.

“I never cried because my father never cried because his father never cried,” he says.

Empire of the Son was named Best

Theatre show of 2015 by the Vancouver Sun and The Georgia Straight. It was also nominated for five Jessie Richardson Theatre award including Outstanding Production, actor and direction.

Secretary of Justice Vitaliano Aguirre informing her that a source had told him that Robredo and Lewis had met in the US. This bit of double hearsay was enough for Uson to tell her followers to spread the word that Robredo and Lewis are “liars” for denying that they met in the United States and that they should be exposed.

The timing of the simultaneous social media attacks on “LeniLeaks” is not coincidental as Communications Secretary Andanar oversees both the vast propaganda machinery of the Philippine government bureaucracy as well as the formidable online Duterte army of trolls ready to pounce and attack anyone perceived to be a threat to Duterte.

In an article that appeared in New Republic (“Rodrigo Duterte’s Army of Online Trolls: How authoritarian regimes are winning the social media wars” January 4, 2017), Sean Williams explained the origin of Duterte’s troll army:

“Duterte’s social media campaign began while he was the mayor of Davao, where he allegedly ran death squads to curb rampant drug dealing and other street crime. In November 2015, when he decided to run for president, he enlisted a marketing consultant named Nic Gabunada to assemble a social media army with a budget of just over \$200,000. Gabunada used the money to pay hundreds of prominent online voices to flood social media with pro-Duterte comments, popularize hashtags, and attack critics. Despite being vastly outspent by his rivals, Duterte swept to power with almost 40 percent of the vote. After the upset victory, the new president’s spokesman issued a warm thanks to Duterte’s 14 million social media “volunteers.”

The government pays online trolls up to \$2,000 a month to create fake social media accounts and flood the digital airwaves with propaganda.

The Philippines seems tailor-made for this kind of propaganda machine. The median age in the country is only 23 years old, and almost half of its 103 million citizens are active social media users. Access to Facebook is provided free with all smartphones, but Filipinos incur data

charges when visiting other web sites, including those of newspapers. As a result, millions of citizens rely on social media for virtually all their news and information, consuming a daily diet of partisan opinion that masquerades as fact.”

But Andanar’s Operation “LeniLeaks” may be running out of steam. When he sought to include the issue in the Duterte cabinet meeting on January 9, he was shot down by Duterte National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon, Jr. who told the press “the President and his Cabinet members had other important issues to deal with rather than focus on the so-called “LeniLeaks.”

Even Secretary of Justice Vitaliano Aguirre agreed with Esperon and minimized the significance of what Loida Nicolas Lewis is calling for. “She is calling for the VP to become president. She is calling for the resignation of the president... she is a dreamer... As long as they do not violate the law, there is nothing wrong with it, nothing wrong to dream,” Aguirre told reporters.

DUTERTE RESIGN MOVEMENT

In a TV interview on ABS-CBN, Loida Nicolas Lewis denied that there was any plot to oust Duterte. “The Duterte Resign Movement is based on President Duterte’s own words that he would resign if drugs are still rampant six months after his inauguration,” she said.

Lewis also emphasized that “dissent is NOT equivalent to a plot or conspiracy. In a democracy, opinions of varying shades, either praise or criticism, are a staple ingredient of a vibrant democracy. Since when has criticism become an element of sedition?”

When asked to comment on Lewis’ charge that Duterte had promised to resign if he did not succeed in dealing with the country’s drug problems within six months, Andanar replied: “the President asked for an extension.”

So when will the Filipino people be asked to vote on Duterte’s extension request?

Since Andanar could not even get the Duterte cabinet to take his “LeniLeaks” charge seriously, he had to change his

strategy. His Presidential Communications Office (PCO) released a statement that “it is now up to Vice President Leni Robredo to convince the public whether the so-called ‘LeniLeaks’ are true or not.”

In other words, since Communications Secretary Andanar can’t prove Robredo guilty, Vice-President Robredo will now have to prove to the public that she is innocent.

Martin Andanar is nothing if not obsessively persistent and clever by half.

(Send comments to Rodel50@gmail.com or mail them to the Law Offices of Rodel Rodis at 2429 Ocean Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94127 or call 415.334.7800).

From Page 12 - Digong’s Feat

infrastructure sectors of the country.

Russia, on the other hand, has also categorically offered assistance, particularly in the procurement of our military requirements. She also expressed her wish to expand trade and cultural ties with us.

At the same time, Digong also managed to clarify his position vis-à-vis the US. His tirades against the outgoing Obama administration were brought about by nothing more than the shabby treatment Washington has been dishing out to us for as long as anyone can remember.

There are indications from the incoming Trump administration that such an attitude would change in three days.

Amidst all these, Digong also made sure the world is now aware that the Philippines would give respect, “especially when we are also accorded respect”, to our friends in the international community.

As presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said: “The President is very keen

that the Philippines is respected and its sovereignty, independence is respected.”

In other words, Digong wants an independent foreign policy that is friendly to all who would be friends (real friends, not patrons) with us.

Is that too much to ask? Why have our past leaders failed to make that message clear to the US? Because all of them, without exception, were willing lapdogs of our former colonial master. Unfortunately, any of their ilk are still around.

Now, they claim that Digong is anti-US?! How so? Because he demands fairer treatment from her?

I am hopeful that before Digong’s term ends, these unenlightened relics of the past will see the light and believe that what he is doing is truly best for the country and our people.

We only have to look at many of our neighbors with independent foreign policies. Not only were they able to catch up to us. We are now eating their dust!

I have seen with my own eyes the economic and physical transformation, mainly through self-reliance, of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and India during my years in the Foreign Service and after. Heartbreaking!

Today is the 265th day of the tenth year of Jonas Burgos’ enforced disappearance.

The family and friends of Jonas hope that the Duterte administration will not be part of the continuing cover-up. The Burgos family implores Digong to haul the perpetrators to justice and bring Jonas back home even with the appointment of Gen. Eduardo Ano as AFP chief who was implicated in the abduction of Jonas almost ten years ago.



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WELCOME to our newly arrived Filipino students who received their student visas to study French full time at Gilmore College International. From left are: Clyde Sedurifa, Mary Ann Go, Dana Kirstie Perolino, Ariel Galvez, Erleen Bureros, and Jonabelle Torrebranca. We wish you success in your studies and good luck in your future career.

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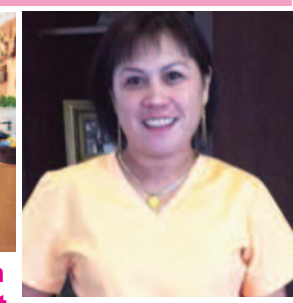
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