

Four presidential candidates for 2009 FAMAS elections on Aug. 9



Chris Bautista



Mel Domingo



Au Osdon



Flor Rillo

This year's FAMAS elections attracted four different teams of candidates who are vying to be the new executive board for two years, 2009-2011. A busy campaign will surely be witnessed by Montrealers for the next two weeks until August 9, when Montrealers eligible to

vote go to Van Horne Park, starting at 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to vote for their candidates.

The Nominating Committee headed by Bert Abiera received the papers of all the candidates by the July 9th deadline.

The four candidates for president have each formed a

team, namely, Chris Bautista, Mel Domingo, Au Osdon, and Flor Rillo. Names of their directors, except that of Chris Bautista's, appear in their individual advertisements in this newspaper. As our printing press will close during the two weeks construction holiday, we

need to publish the Star much earlier than usual. We did not have the time to offer our advertising service to all parties who may be interested in publicizing their candidates. However, the Star is not the only

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First Congresswoman from Abra welcomed in Montreal



Congresswoman Cecilia Seares-Luna, holding a bouquet, was met at the Pierre Elliot Trudeau on her surprise visit to Montreal. She is flanked by (from left) Bang Barba, Ben B. Bade, and Buena Bersalona. (Photo taken by Z. Kharroubi, July 14, 2009).

By Ben B. Bade

Montreal, July 14, 2009 - The first and only Congresswoman representing the lone district of Abra, Honorable Cecilia Seares-Luna, made a surprise visit to Montreal, on Tuesday, July 14, 2009. She was welcomed at Pierre Elliot Trudeau Airport by a group of Abrianians from Montreal and Toronto. She was feted at a local sushi and barbecue place, Sakura Restaurant, on St. Charles Boulevard in Kirkland, through the courtesy of Carlito Bade. In the evening, a reception was held in her honor at 6767 Cote des Neiges Community Centre in Montreal.

Congresswoman Cecilia Seares-Luna has been traveling with President Macapagal since June 17, 2009 and visited Colombia, Brazil,

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EDITORIAL

A clean, honest, and orderly election may help FAMAS change people's attitudes

The Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs, popularly known as FAMAS, has been plagued with problems. In spite of its popularity as the biggest and the oldest association, it has an image problem that is hard to change. Now that we have four different groups vying to be its future executive board, does it have a chance to be transformed into a credible organization? Will the people be willing to participate in a clean, democratic and honest election? It remains to be seen if they will and if they turn up in greater numbers.

It is a common knowledge that Filipinos in general love politics but they are also known to be easily taken by influence peddlers, specially in the Philippines where poverty has made many poor people susceptible to be bought during elections. It is no wonder then that the government elected with a price tag often run for election, not to serve the people but to have the opportunity to get rich and reward their cronies. It is a sad and shameful story. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule, but so far, there seems to be no end to this corruption in different levels of our society and and we cannot put the blame on any specific entity as this has been deeply rooted in the culture. We have read some attempts by enlightenend groups to educate the people not to allow themselves to be bought, but this is easier said than done. How can people resist the glitter of money when they and their children are starving? Obviously, the only way we can eliminate corruption is through economics, that is, to give people the means to meet their basic needs - give them jobs, and equal opportunities to improve themselves and their children.

But the problem of poverty does not really apply to Filipino-Canadians. After all, the money involved is just too small to make such a big influence on voters yet, strangely enough, rumours have always circulated that some people have seen membership fees being paid by candidates. Why do they resort to this method of campaigning? It is hoped that this practice is not going to be continued anymore for it discourages those who are sincere and honest from running in elections.

We have also known of another common problem - candidates are all eager to promise

that they will do their best in serving the community but once elected, it seems that the passion dies. In most cases, we have seen a few who carry the load of the whole executive board. This is a general pattern of most organizations - it is a sad commentary but we all have our own personal experiences when people accept the position of being an officer but does not seem to have the capacity to share the load of being a leader. Often times, whoever is the most industrious and committed person fills up the slack of others in the organization.

We do not want this vicious cycle to continue. What we need in FAMAS are people who will do what they promise and who will be willing to share the burden of a leadership role. Voting for the right people to be the leaders at FAMAS is a tricky and often difficult task. It is easy to be swayed by friends who have their own preferences, perhaps not based on any clear reason but on emotions. If we really want our community to be progressive economically, socially and politically, we need leaders with a vision, and who are committed to serve all, regardless of their origins, beliefs, and social status.

FAMAS and its past leaders have all contributed something to the community - some more than others. However, times have changed and our community is growing in size but it seems that we need to grow in many other ways. There is not enough attention focused on economics. Most community leaders have been pre-occupied with the social and religious aspects. There are organizations of different regions - Bicol, Ilocos, Tagalog, Kapampangan, etc. All these associations have their reasons to exist, but what they fail to have is the involvement to work with the whole community regardless of regional origin. Perhaps, the new leadership of FAMAS can take a new role - to demonstrate that it is possible to build our future by being involved in promoting cooperation.

During this election, we would like to encourage all our fellow citizens to exercise their right to vote in order to elect the best people who will work for our future development. We need to change attitudes of apathy and selfishness - we can be more progressive if we do.

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

What do you get when you patronize the Filipino Coop? Earn points to make your share capital grow!



New members who made the suggestion of a patronage refund box - Jane Bayangan (left) and Agnes Calgo (center) are the first ones to try it out while Joesie Bingayen, Gilmore College student volunteer cashier looks on (July 4, 2009)

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COOPERATIVE NEWS

Filipino Coop Coffee Shop/Internet Cafe will open soon

We have survived the first month without any paid employee but it is a big sacrifice to be at the Coop everyday. Not only is it a drain on my energy and time but it also prevents me from working on the business plan, preparing tax reports, and many hundreds of administrative tasks. I need many more members to volunteer their time and share their talents to make the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative alive and well.

Our attempt to do fund raising by organizing the educational tour to Quebec on Saturday, July 18, could have been more successful if many people got involved in disposing of the tickets. With the help of the ads in the Filipino Star, over 40 tickets have been sold but the break even point to cover the cost of the bus is 35. Perhaps, we can have a better result next time if more members of the cooperative will be interested in helping out. I cannot help but lament the fact that it seems difficult to make people get interested in participating in the affairs of the cooperative. People are all busy, but I believe if "there is a will there is a way".

At any rate, I am deeply involved and determined to make the cooperative work as I have already committed most of my assets in saving the coop. Fortunately, I have met many new members who seem to be keen in doing their part. I just hope that they will maintain their interest and convince others to shop at the coop regularly. The old members under the former administration are rarely seen at the Coop. Although there are now almost 700 members, only a handful seems to shop frequently. Where have they all gone? It is therefore the reason why I thought of opening up a coffee shop to find a way for people to come and visit the store.

I have informally done a survey and most people say it is a good idea. I only have one negative response who said that people will prefer Tim Horton. But I replied - what if we give it cheaper and better? And we can also introduce the concept of free coffee with the purchase of \$30 or more (except rice which is hardly profitable).

A new member suggested to have a patronage refund box. Every time a member buys, a ballot is filled up and put in the box. The purchases will be converted into points and then changed to

membership shares - more details to follow after our next meeting of the board of directors.

Starting next week, we will begin recruiting new members and new volunteers more actively. We have new members who are going to be trained as part time cashiers. Most of my students have promised to sign up - I am specially counting on Sarah, Joesie, Ruby, and others like them who are very keen students and are willing to be business apprentices. I believe that most Gilmore students I sign up will be the future leaders of the cooperative movement.

With the relocation of Gilmore College to a better location at 5450 Cote des Neiges (corner of Edouard Montpetit), I hope to attract more students. I have found that they are more responsive and eager to be involved in the cooperative movement, specially when I mention the possibility of applying for a franchise of having our own credit union. This is actually my long felt dream way back in 1992 when I tried to meet with the directors of the Caisse Populaire de Notre Dame de Grace. I was told then that we need to have more members who would open an account. Instead of doing a "Paluagan" system which is considered illegal, we can do the same thing under the Caisse Populaire Desjardins franchise.

As our population is steadily increasing, we need to learn how to use the power of numbers for our own advancement. Instead of patronizing foreign owned businesses, we should support our fellow citizens stores first. It may be a coincidence, but our move to a new location may prove to be a good omen. The building where Gilmore International College will be relocated is just on top of the Caisse Populaire de Cote des Neiges. For this reason, it will be much easier for me to deal with this branch and start my business banking with them.

To reiterate my frequent request - to all our fellow citizens - members or not - please shop first at the Filipino Coop before going anywhere else. Prices are as low as other stores. If they are higher, let us know and we will meet the competitor's price. Your patronage is the key to our brighter future together.

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi
President, 2008-2011

Finally, caregivers have access to CSST coverage



**Evelyn Calugay
President, PINAY**

Montreal, July 12, 2009 -

Evelyn Calugay, president of PINAY, an advocacy group that works for the betterment of working conditions of caregivers, has something to celebrate. During their 18th anniversary barrio fiesta last Sunday, July 12, it was announced by PQ MNA François Rebello, that CSST is going to be extended to domestic workers which will take effect in the fall. This latest accomplishment of PINAY, is just one of two major projects, the other being the inclusion of domestic work in the labor standards law. With the inclusion of domestic workers in the labour law, their working hours were reduced to 40 hours and their salary adjusted to minimum wage. But one problem remains - the live-in requirement has not always guaranteed fair working hours which often are more than what the contract allows. PINAY has been working on further improvements to the live-in caregiver program and may soon have another good news as a result of the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Immigration in Parliament.

The CSST coverage guarantees compensation to a worker who is hurt in a work accident or get sick. Previously, live-in caregivers were not considered as having a dangerous job, and therefore excluded but PINAY persisted in their campaign which they began in 2005.

The Minister of Labor, David Whissel, has been obliged to remedy the situation of caregivers being excluded from CSST coverage which was declared discriminatory by the Human Rights Commission. The spokesperson of the opposition PQ Party, François Rebello, reproached

the Labour Minister for not having remedied this unfair situation of caregivers since the spring when the new labour law was passed. He said that there could have been many ways to extend CSST protection to these workers. He argued that there was negligence on the part of the Labor Minister and pointed out that the work is not yet finished.

Different scenarios have been studied by the Human Rights Commission. Due to lack of time, and since automatic coverage of domestic workers require many modifications to the law, it was impossible to include this provision in the law according to the Labour Minister.

"La Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse" stated last December that the exclusion of domestic workers from the definition of what is a worker, as well their exclusion from the protection against accidents and illnesses are discriminatory, specially when the exclusion is based on three factors - sex, ethnique origin and social class.

Some statistics show that about 25 000 domestic workers are in Quebec and that 90% of them are women, mostly from the Philippines.

On the other hand, Evelyn Calugay wishes that the Harper government abolish, or at least soften the conditions of the live-in caregiver program (LCP) imposed upon workers. "We demand that the federal government remove the obligation to live-in with the employer."

Caregivers are required to complete 24 months of work within 3 years before applying for a permanent residence. Moreover, caregivers are obliged to live with their employers during this time. The program was adopted in 1992 to meet the shortage of labour in this area. The president of PINAY asks the Quebec government to pressure Ottawa to act.

The PQ Labour critic asks Mr. David Whissel to require employers to give time off to caregivers in order to study French as most of them are not allowed to go out. He believes that this will ensure a respect for the law that stipulates only 40 hours of work weekly.

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President Arroyo to meet President Obama on July 30

GMA 'invited' to meeting with Obama on July 30

By Pia Lee-Brago Updated July 13, 2009 12:00 AM

MANILA, Philippines - A meeting between President Arroyo and US President Barack Obama will finally



take place when she visits Washington on July 30, the Department of Foreign Affairs announced yesterday.

Washington also made the announcement in saying Mrs. Arroyo will become Southeast Asia's first leader to meet Obama.

"The (US) President will receive President Arroyo at the White House on July 30, where they will have an opportunity to discuss ways to enhance US-Philippine cooperation on critical global issues including counter-terrorism and climate change, as well as further the traditionally strong alliance and bond between our nations," the White House said in a statement.

US Embassy spokesperson Rebecca Thompson, however, did not say whether Mrs. Arroyo's visit to Washington was upon the request of the Philippine government or from an invitation from Washington.

Diplomatic sources, on the other hand, revealed Mrs. Arroyo's visit and one-on-one meeting with Obama is an invitation from the US government.

"The President was also the first leader from Southeast Asia to

receive a telephone call from President Obama after his election," a DFA official also pointed out.

Malacañang said Mrs. Arroyo "has accepted the invitation to meet" with Obama.

"President Arroyo will discuss our poverty alleviation and economic resiliency programs, good governance, counter terrorism efforts and its contribution to peace and stability in the region," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said.

"This visit is an affirmation of the strong partnership between the two countries," he said.

Mrs. Arroyo, who last visited Washington in June 2008 and met then-president George W. Bush in the White House, is also scheduled to meet "key US government officials and members of Congress," as well as entrepreneurs and business groups.

Remonde said it was not surprising that Washington extended the invitation to Mrs. Arroyo to meet Obama.

He said US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney already dropped hints several days ago that a meeting between Mrs. Arroyo and Obama is in the works.

Mrs. Arroyo was criticized last year for what opposition leaders described as a desperate attempt to seek an audience with Obama.

Last February, Mrs. Arroyo made an unscheduled side trip to Washington capital to attend the annual National Prayer Breakfast with Obama but they were not able to talk.

Kenney earlier told a radio interview that Obama is not avoiding Mrs. Arroyo.

She said she would not be surprised if there will be a high-level visit to Washington this year.

Lawmakers, on the other hand, urged Mrs. Arroyo to be wary of being used by the US in pursuing its

interest in the region when she makes the visit.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the government must bear in mind that US interest in the Philippines is linked primarily to their concern about the



growing economic and political strength of China.

"We must be careful not to be used as an unwitting pawn in the struggle between two giants," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan said Mrs. Arroyo should ensure that the country's interest would be primordial in the meeting with Obama.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, for his part, expressed optimism that the meeting would be for the good of the country but not necessarily for Mrs. Arroyo.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II said the US concerns over the Philippines is confined to security issues and combating terrorism, noting the recent visit of US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) chief Leon Panetta in the country.

Roxas said the Philippines should not allow itself to be used as a "staging point" by the US government in any of its defense positioning in Southeast Asian region.

Sen. Loren Legarda said it is about time that Mrs. Arroyo and Obama should meet to discuss pressing issues.

"It has been long in coming. They should walk their talk and rethink developments. US should help in every way possible to countries vulnerable to climate change impacts," she said.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, on the other hand, advised Mrs. Arroyo to push for the Philippine government's interests rather than seeking support from the US to allow her to stay in power.

Cayetano said Mrs. Arroyo should push for supporting the rights of Filipino veterans and find ways to help Filipinos working in the US who are greatly affected by the financial crisis.

"It's always good news when a Filipino President is given time and opportunity to push for a Philippine agenda. We hope the President would do just this to push for veteran's rights and compensation," he said.

DFA officials said Mrs. Arroyo is expected to thank Obama and the US Congress for passing the Veterans bill.

"It (the meeting) is an opportunity for President Arroyo to thank the US Congress for the passage of the Veterans bill and discuss with them possible legislative agenda that will promote Philippine interest," a DFA official said.

The Stimulus Bill also known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, recognizes the military service of Filipino World War II veterans and grants a lump sum of \$15,000 for US-based veterans and \$9,000 for those living in the Philippines.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo admitted that the bill on the benefits of Filipino World War II veterans was in danger of being dropped because of the financial crisis and new priorities of the US government.

Pinay celebrates 18th anniversary barrio fiesta style, July 12, 2009

Montreal, July 12, 2009 - Pinay, a non-profit organization, celebrated its 18 years of struggle for women's rights and advocacy through Philippine dances and music. It was held at the Maison de la Culture from 1:00 to 5:00 P.M. At the same time, it was a fund raising drive.

The members themselves provided the entertainment in a variety of ways and mostly in the folk dance tradition and popular songs. To enlighten the audience about these dances, a souvenir program included a background information about Philippine cultural heritage and traditions. The master of ceremonies, Ms. Jasmin de la Calzada, introduced the various numbers and another lady gave the French translation.

The performers were very well

received and applauded. But the most applauded number was the one performed by three young children who stole the show, particularly, the youngest dancer, a 5-year old girl named Loren. She shook her hips in an unabashed manner which made everyone laughed. The other two young performers, Russel and Richard, also demonstrated that they have some talent and who knows if someday they follow the footsteps of Michael Jackson who they admire. In fact, the emcee explained that the dance routine was inspired by Michael Jackson's "The Thriller" which served as the background setting of their dance routine.

It was a very entertaining, pleasant evening spent with the Pinay ladies. Congratulations for a job well done. (Zenaida Kharroubi)



From left: Loren, Russel and Richard (July 12, 2009)

From Page 1 Congresswoman

Washington, and Chicago. She was invited by the Abranians of Toronto and Montreal to make a short visit. In spite of her hectic schedule, she accepted the invitation to come to Montreal on a short notice.

Through the collaborated



Congresswoman Cecilia Seares-Luna was welcomed at the Pierre Elliot Trudeau airport last Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at around 1:00 p.m.

efforts of many volunteers, the welcome reception was a success. It was attended by over a hundred people. There was a sumptuous table of buffet food topped by lechon donated by Fely Rosales. Other members brought pot luck food, and even brought flowers and decorations for the reception hall.

The Abranians of Montreal

luck service with the Abranians, Mrs. Favilla for the bouquet she offered to Congresswoman Seares-Luna, Irma Barras for being at the reception table, Randy Timbol for giving the invocation before dinner, Magnolia Camat for leading the singing of the National Anthem of the Philippines and Canada, and Zenaida Kharroub, editor and publisher of the Filipino

Star, for being at the airport and reception to meet Congresswoman Seares-Luna.

The whole evening's affair was highlighted by the inspirational talk of Hon. Cecilia Seares-Luna. She announced that the bridges she had fought for to connect the different towns of Abra have materialized. One of the three is now in service, while the

From Page 1 FAMAS

newspaper where people can get the information about the election.

The Comelec headed by Pastor Emma Denny will be in charge of the election. To facilitate the casting of ballots on election day, Saturday, August 9, people can pre-register.

The advance pre-registration will be held on Sunday, Aug. 2 at the FAMAS center building on 4708 Van Horne, from 1:00 to 5:00 P.M. Bring proof of identification.

The 2009 Comelec has set aside the following rules and procedures:

What to bring:

* Duly accomplished registration form

- * Registration fee
- * Valid medicare card
- * For students, bring your last school year's ID.

Upon registration, you will receive your new FAMAS ID card which you will present for validation on Election Day (Do not lose your ID Card. No replacement ID cards will be given to pre-registered voters) On Election Day, an express lane for pre-registered voters will enable you to go directly to the registration table where the COMELEC will issue you the official ballot form.

Registration fees are:

- \$7.00 - Individuals
- \$4.00 - Seniors & Students
- \$10.00 - Couples

Everyone is encouraged to be a member and vote.

Ginger and Garlic against Swine Flu by Reuben T. Santos

Using Google as a search engine and for references, log on the following with keywords "garlic against swine flu" – "ginger against swine flu" – "garlic medicinal power" – "ginger medicinal power" and through these websites, you will find information that will help you understand the medical benefit of garlic and ginger against Swine Flu or other flu viruses. But be aware however of its side effects as with all miracle drugs, old and new, which may have a few unknown and known side effects.

After reading those websites I mentioned above and other websites about garlic and ginger on herbal and home remedies, my understanding about swine flu or any flu starts as a simple COLD and from there it develops into something more serious with unwelcome adverse and with sometimes more serious consequences.

The first sign of a coming COLD as we all know is sneezing followed by a running nose, coughing and sore throat. From the very start of the cold symptom (sneezing), a clove of raw garlic should be chewed after breakfast followed by a raw ginger after dinner for a day or two - and hopefully it will stop the virus from spreading and developing into a full blown cold. If the sneezing persists with a running nose followed by sore throat and coughing, then perhaps 2 times a day of garlic with a full stomach and in between ginger should be chewed and ingested.

We warn you however that chewing garlic or ginger is not a walk in the park especially so with garlic. Garlic being chewed within seconds will explode like

hot pepper while running it around your mouth and you may also end up in tears but it will go away anyway in a few minutes. Chewing garlic or ginger is somewhat very effective since its potency could be lost within 8 seconds especially so with garlic. Boiling and drinking either ginger or garlic are assumed to be less effective. If the cold persists with a fever and shortness of breath – it is now time to see a health professional for immediate treatment other than garlic and ginger.

Garlic for your ready reference is known as nature's anti-viral, antibiotics, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal substance among others, while ginger is known to be effective antiseptics, antibiotics, anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory.

England during the 1st World War and a part of the 2nd. World War encouraged their people to plant garlic in their back yard for the government's war effort as a deterrent against infection and to heal their soldiers that were battle wounded. So this must be a very effective healing drug for health in war as well as in peace.

It is hoped that the alternate treatment for Swine Flu (H1N1) I described above and references may help the less fortunate people of our society who can ill afford to buy drugs for protection and treatment against Swine Flu (H1N1) - such as Tamiflu, Oseltamivir and Zanamivir (Relenza) that are available in the market at the present time but may not be available in the future should supply not meet the demand.

rtsantos_ca@yahoo.com



Mariano reading the certificate of appreciation awarded to Congresswoman Cecilia Seares-Luna while Fely Rosales (center) looks on.

would like to give thanks and appreciation to Mariano Barba of Montreal, Josefina Seares of Vancouver, Alfonso Terenal, Buena Bersalona, and Lino Navarro of Toronto, for bringing our capable and beautiful Congresswoman to see her "kailian" in Toronto and Montreal, a very rare occasion.

The following people are also to be thanked: Mariano Barba for coordinating the entire welcome reception; Carlito Bade and his wife, Lilibeth Bade for the reception and lunch at their restaurant, BBQ and Sakura Sushi, and for accommodating them at their house during their stay in Montreal; Riza Esmeralda and Mme Naima for reserving the hall for the party; Connie Favilla for being the master of ceremonies of the evening's program and preparing and decorating the hall as well as coordinating the pot

other two will be finished in 2010 or 2011. All the Abranians applauded and cheered the Congresswoman for a job well done.

PACDAAR
(Notice)
Abranians General
Assembly
Saturday, July 25
11:00 A.M.
6060 Westbury corner
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Erma - 514-933-5040
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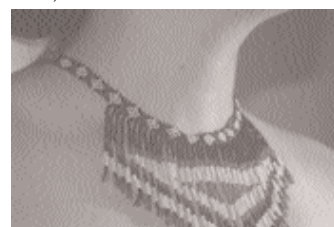
The province's foremost asset is **Puerto Galera**, blessed with one of the world's most beautiful natural harbors. Known as the Pearl of Mindoro, it is world-famous for splendid beaches, coral reefs, and exquisite dive sites.

Other attraction within the area is Sabang Beach, a portion of which is tourist-flocked for water sports and a cluster of nightspots popular for evening socials. Beside Sabang Beach is Small La Laguna, with amazingly beautiful coral reefs, and water ideal for snorkeling and scuba diving.

Indulge in a number of special interest tours while in the province, from mountain climbing to trekking, hiking, camping, butterfly watching, game fishing, and adventure trips to the wilderness. Enjoy active water sports such as scuba diving, snorkeling, and swimming. Visit the Mangyan settlement areas, and find it rewarding to engage in natural cave

and waterfall exploration and island hopping.

The ethnic tribes, Mangyans, are gentle and withdrawn but many of them have managed to integrate into the cultural mainstream, largely in the municipalities of Mansalay, Baco, & Puerto Galera. These Mangyans are skilled weavers and craftsmen, producing intricate tribal finery, including baskets, mats, and other items, both functional and aesthetic.



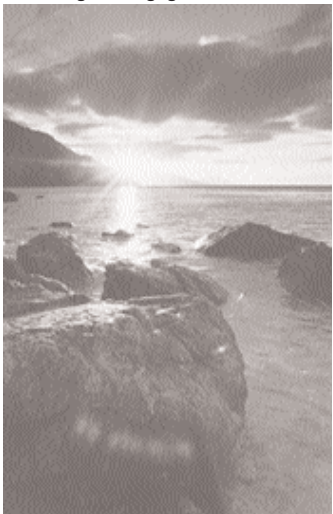
Mangyan Tribe traditional necklace.

Puerto Galera - A major tourist destination with its beautiful harbor, numerous fine beaches, and sheltered coves against a green mountain. The more famous beaches are Haligi, white, Tamaraw, Talipanan, Small and Big Lalaguna, Garcia, and Sabang. All are ideal for water skiing, windsurfing, scuba diving, snorkeling, boating and swimming.

Tamaraw Falls - The largest waterfall in the province, is 131 meters above sea level with a natural swimming pool at its base. **Hidden Paradise** - The attraction consists of a natural spring with a swimming pool and picnic cottages. It is located in Baco, and can be reached in 45 minutes by taking a jeepney bound for



Galeras such as this one can be found resting on the shores of, where else, Puerto Galera



Tamaraw Falls, Puerto Galera
It is actually a series of asymmetrical falls, leading to the grand one dropping to a frothy waterbed 423-feet below.



Hidden Paradise Beach, located in Baco. The area contains a natural spring with swimming pool and picnic cottages.

above sea level with a natural swimming pool at its base.

Hidden Paradise - The attraction consists of a natural spring with a swimming pool and picnic cottages. It is located in Baco, and can be reached in 45 minutes by taking a jeepney bound for the Calapan market.

Mt. Halcon - Towering 8,488 feet above sea level, Mt. Halcon is the country's third highest peak. It is a favourite destination for nature tripping and mountain climbing. Mt. Halcon is located in Baco. It is accessible in two hours, by taking a jeepney to Baco, the jump-off point.

Alibatan Island - The island measures five hectares and is noted for its white sand. The place serves as the breeding place of seagulls and turtles. Corals and oysters can be found all around the area. The island is also called "Target Island" because Americans who stayed in San Jose used this place for bombing practices

in 1946. It is located in Baco, and can be reached in an hour through a motorized banca from the market square bound for Alibatan Island.

Buyayao Island - It is a rocky island, except for the area facing Buyayao Peninsula. Big snakes called "sobre kama" are found in the mountains. The water around the island is suited for deep-sea fishing. It is located off the coast of Mansalay, and can be reached in 30 minutes by motorized banca from Mansalay market.

Colorful Festivals - Numerous festivals run year round, including the most popular: *Banana Festival* (March 18-19; Baco city) which coincides with the town fiesta in honor of St. Joseph; *Coco Festival* (December 8; San Teodoro) a religious festival honoring the Immaculate Conception featuring many activities centered on the town's agricultural bounty, the coconut; ■



Top & Above: Views of the gorgeous Puerto Galera beaches



Celebration of the Feast of Sto. Niño, the Patron Saint of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro



Mt. Halcon (Baco), towering 8,488 feet, is the country's third highest peak



Bangka boats lined up at the end of the day on White Beach



Annuan Sunset - Annuan Beach is located on the right side of White Beach, just beyond the rocks.



Blue Crystal Bay

Opposition braces for GMA's emergency rule



Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Makati Mayor and United Opposition (UNO) president Jejomar Binay yesterday warned that the next few months will be critical to the opposition as it prepares for the possible declaration of a state of emergency and even martial law if the bombings continue.

"We are expecting Malacañang to draw up a scenario where eventually the opposition will be implicated in bombings and so-called destabilization plots," he said.

"Executive Secretary Ermita has always said that Mrs. Arroyo will declare martial law if there is chaos and these bombings are intended to create a perception of chaos," he said.

Four more bomb blasts were reported yesterday, one outside a church in Jolo, Sulu and another beside a military vehicle in Iligan City. Two other bombs went off Monday at a transmission tower in Lanao del Norte. At least six persons were reported killed and 24 wounded.

Earlier, an explosion had rocked the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Cotabato City. Six persons were reported killed and 30 injured.

The bombing in Cotabato has been blamed on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Jemayah Islamiyah (JI). Muslim rebels, however, said the explosions were the handiwork of the military.

But unlike the first time martial law was declared, Binay said the opposition is ready to defy the administration.

"If the administration thinks that the opposition will meekly accept martial law, it is in for a surprise. We will not sit still and accept such blatant abuse of power," he said.

Binay added the present situation

bore similarities to the months prior to the declaration of martial law in September 1972.

"What we are seeing is a reinvention of the martial law playbook of 1972. But the motive is the same: the hunger for power," he said.

The opposition leader also said threats of bombings and the military show of force Saturday at Camp Aguinaldo will not deter the opposition in its plans to stage protest actions culminating in a rally during the State of the Nation Address (Sna) on July 27.

It was also stressed that President Arroyo should fire National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales from his position for proposing a revolutionary government, a transition government, to effect changes in the Constitution.

Liberal Party Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said that "Gonzales should be fired from his position, being the National Security Adviser, for stating that there must be a revolution in this country and a transition government must be set up where Mrs. Arroyo will sit as head of that transition government," Biazon stressed.

"These kind of statements only add up to the controversy, much more if made amid charges of destabilization, with these series of bombings taking place in the country now," he said.

The senator, who heads the committee on national defense and security, said Malacañang should explain the statement made recently by Gonzales and clarify its position on this matter, raising the implication of the recommendation made by the country's top security adviser.

"Had that statement been made by any of the members of the opposition, I'm sure by now whoever uttered those words will be behind bars. Not so in the case of Gonzales, obviously, because he is still the national security adviser," he said.

Gonzales was recently quoted proposing a revolutionary government, patterned after former President Corazon Aquino's reign as a result of the 1986 EDSA Revolt.

Malacañang has denied any involvement of the administration behind the series of bombings in government offices and in Mindanao areas.

Palace Executive Eduardo Ermita

said, "the bombings in Cotabato City are still being investigated but as of now, the government finds that they have the signature of the special operations group of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)."

He denied reports of the administration's involvement and called all these reports "black propaganda."

Presidential Adviser For Mindanao Jesus Dureza also confirmed that the Cotabato bombing is still under investigation.

For Senate President Juan Ponce-Enrile, it is a renewal of peace talks.

"Now is perhaps the time to reactivate the stalled peace process. I call for the resumption of the Mindanao peace talks in a manner that is transparent and in consultation with all the stakeholders in that part of the country. We will not achieve economic prosperity unless we find peace in Mindanao," he said.

"As Senate president and as an ordinary Filipino, I am appalled by the latest spate of bombings in Mindanao, particularly in the cities of Cotabato, Iligan and Jolo.

"I condemn in the strongest possible terms these cowardly and terroristic acts that must not go unpunished. As a former defense minister, I expect the police and military to leave no stone unturned in investigating these incidents and bring the perpetrators to justice," he added.

Sen. Richard Gordon echoed the proposition made by Enrile, urging urged both the government and the MILF to go back to the negotiating table, while suggesting at the same time that the military should step up surveillance and intelligence operations to stop the spate of bombings.

The challenge for the authorities to get to the bottom of these incidents is even greater today given the current political situation, Enrile pointed.

"Already, there are speculations that these bombings are state-sponsored to pave the way for a 'No-Elections' (no-el) scenario. The police should crack these cases open to dispel these dangerous speculations as soon as possible," he said.

Gabriela party-list Rep. Liza Maza

said the motive for the bombings is highly suspect as they are happening in time for Mrs. Arroyo's final Sona.

The Gabriela solon bared she has filed House Resolution No. 1257 directing the committee on public order and safety to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, into the string of bomb-related incidents in Maguindanao, Cotabato City and parts of Metro Manila and the most recent explosions in Jolo, Sulu, Iligan City and Lanao del Norte.

Maza stressed the urgency of an immediate and independent investigation on these incidents so as to persecute those responsible for these evil acts and attain justice for the victims and their families.

Muntinlupa Rep. Ruffy Biazon said the recent bomb attacks could put the Arroyo administration's ability and credibility to handle such situation to a test. He pointed out that with P600 million under the Office of the President, P270 million in the Philippine National Police (PNP) and P118 million under the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), "it is highly questionable why the series of attacks seems to go on without the authorities unable to give a clear picture of who is responsible."

But Speaker Prospero Nograles cautioned the opposition and other sectors who he said are spreading unfounded accusations against the government with regard to the spate of bombings saying that instead of sowing intrigues, they should help the government in frustrating those who are behind the bombing.

"This is not the time to speculate, to spread rumors and to sow intrigues. This is the time for the entire country to unite and link arms together and defeat the bombers, terrorists and saboteurs who have nothing but evil in their agenda," Nograles said through a text message.

"I urge the citizenry and the opposition to refrain from too much politicking because not only the present security of state is at stake but the entire country's future is on the line especially Mindanao. It's time to forge a common cause to defeat the enemies of the state." ■

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Cory Aquino's health condition has stabilized

It was March of 2008 when former President Cory Aquino got diagnosed of colon cancer and she immediately went through chemotherapy soon after that. Her family had a few scares because of her risky condition but prayers for her speedy recovery seemed to have worked wonders during the past year. Until she got confined again at the Makati Medical Center last June 22, more than a month after she had the affected area in her colon removed (a medical operation called laparoscopic colectomy).

Even her youngest daughter Kris kept mum about it until word finally got out to the media last Wednesday, June 24, as countless friends and supporters gathered at Greenbelt Chapel for the beginning of a nine-day novena mass for the former president's fast recuperation. Information about her real condition was limited though because the said hospital refused to release a medical bulletin while the Aquino family remained tight-lipped about it except for the brief statement that they gave yesterday.

"Our Mother has been battling cancer with much courage for a year and a half. Her current hospitalization was necessary because of her loss of

appetite, caused by fluid build-up in her stomach area. We remain in complete trust in God's infinite healing power. Our family wishes to thank the Filipino people for their prayers and outpouring of love and concern for our mother. She continues to be a woman of faith, a fighter, a source of hope and inspiration for all of us, not just her family but our entire nation as well. Just like she has always taught us by her life's example, we entrust everything to God."



President Corazon Aquino, seen here in June

On the other hand, Cory's spokesperson Deedee Siytagco revealed that Cory is already conscious and have been transferred from intensive care unit to a regular hospital

ward, but is not taking any medications at the moment. "We're worried but we're hopeful. She's no longer under chemo now. Now, she's stable [but] there is no medical intervention there."

Incidentally, two of Cory's strongest critics during her administration sincerely expressed their wish for her to recover as soon as possible. They also insisted that whatever hurt that they have caused each other in the past had already been healed over time. "I've had my political differences with Cory during her time as president. But that is a part of our role in the society, [there is] nothing personal about it. On a personal basis, I've always had a high respect for her. I would say that I would pray for her and hope that the Lord will embrace her if it should come to that. Or if there's any way for a miracle to happen, I wish that it would happen," said Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile.

Senator Gregorio Honasan also shared the same sentiments in a separate interview. "We join our colleague Senator Noynoy Aquino in prayers for former President Aquino. Public interest demands that we all go through an act of forgetfulness para

humilom na yung mga sugat. Kapag hindi natin ginawa ito, [it will go] back to the same vicious cycle." The senator further recalled that they have been in speaking terms since the 2007 elections and people should stop making a big deal about his show of sympathy this time around. "I approached her and congratulated her then for having a son in the senate. Ang punto ko lang dito ay hindi na issue kung ano mang nangyari noon."

Many continued to be concerned, however, especially with Cory's emotional revelation to a friend that she wished to join the dearly departed and be reunited with her husband, Ninoy Aquino. "Kung siya daw ang papipiliin, parang gusto na daw niya sigurong makasama si Ninoy. Kaya lang ginagawa niya ang lahat ng pwedeng gawin alang-alang sa mga anak at apo niya," recalled Cory's good friend and former cabinet member Marjie Juico.

As of press time, the Aquino siblings are said to have stayed round the clock with their mom during this sad and stressful time. ■

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Eva Marie Acosta signing the receipt of her prize.



Mei Mendoza Bebilone, President of SM Services International, gives the prize to Eva Marie Acosta. 2008 winner of the trip to the Philippines.



Eva Marie Acosta (holding cheque) poses with her friends and Mei Mendoza Bebilone (2nd from left, back row)

COMMUNITY NEWS

Overflow crowd applauds M.P. Irwin Cotler's nomination in Mt. Royal

July 1, 2009 — An overflow crowd applauded the re-nomination of the Hon. Irwin Cotler, who has represented the Mount Royal riding since his first election victory in a by-election in 1999.

Cotler said "he was particularly gratified by the presence of his entire family – save for his newly wedded

Government with ignoring, marginalizing, and systematically breaching in the case of Canadian citizens imprisoned abroad.

Cotler said that he was mindful of the fact that the economy was a dominant concern, in his riding as elsewhere – including apprehension about jobs, savings, investments,



Howard Liebman (left) waiting for Hon. Irwin Cotler to finish his remarks during the investiture and nomination meeting at Ruby Foo's on July 5, 2009.

daughter and son-in-law – and especially by the presence of his four grandchildren, the oldest of whom was born on the eve of his nomination, 10 years ago.

The Liberal M.P. and former Minister of Justice added that he "was very much appreciative of the large assembly of his fellow M.P.'s from Québec – which, Québec lieutenant Denis Coderre stated, was large enough to actually hold a meeting of the Québec caucus.

The nomination meeting also witnessed the launch of an Inter-communal Council involving the leadership of the communities that make up what Cotler called this multicultural rainbow riding.

Cotler also outlined a comprehensive and inspiring agenda for the return of Parliament in the fall, including: the advancement of his Iran Accountability Act, which has emerged as a template model to hold Ahmadinejad's Iran accountable for its nuclear ambitions, genocidal incitement, and massive domestic repression; the advancement of other legislation he has introduced, such as the Sudan Accountability Act, and his Remedies for Victims of Terrorism Act; his social justice agenda – health care, environment, immigration, access to justice, all of which are of particular concern for residents of the riding; and the promotion and protection of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which he charged the Conservative

pensions, and the like, and he said that a Liberal Government would restore the fiscal integrity that had been abandoned by the Conservative government, who both squandered a 14 billion dollar surplus left to them by the Liberals and mismanaged the economy

Answering the Cry of the Poor

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A Time To Change is a message to each in everyone of us , that it is time to think of others not just ourselves ..think of our less fortunate brothers and sisters living in poverty around the world. I know , it will be hard to change

the world but it has to start somewhere....and that is YOU!!

Please come to Casa Grecque Restaurant 13081 Gouin Blvd. Ouest, corner Fredmir Street, Pierrefonds. 7:00 -7:30 pm , the program starts and will allow you to learn more about GK... We salute the owner of Casa Grecque (Angelo) for donating their time, place and food for this special event. Anybody that needs transport from Montreal to West Island pls. call our volunteers:

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Celebrating Philippine Independence Day

It was a day of celebration, Filipino-style at the Mackenzie-King Park last June 14. Over 5,000 Filipinos in Montreal trooped to the park to commemorate the Philippine

the different Filipino/Quebec organizations followed by a thanksgiving mass. The rest of the day was filled with activities made possible by several Filipino businesses that supported the event.

The most popular spot with all-day, non-stop visitors was the Western Union booth together with their agent partner, Laurentian Bank. People gravitated to the attractive booth of bright yellow/black (Western Union) and blue. Western Union executive Sherley Barthelemy was on hand to warmly welcome the Filipinos and answer questions on Western Union and money transfer in general. The crowd was given prizes such as mugs, conference bags, DVD's of OPM songs just by joining the "perya-inspired game Baso't-Bola". It's a game that is not only fun but informative as well. People walked out of the booth knowing that they could go to any of the 39 branches of Laurentian Bank to send money with Western Union. They can also get the Western Union Preferred Customer



Independence Day organized by the Federation of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec. Pinoy food, fun and games marked the day's festivities.

The event started with a Parade of Card (PCP) for free at any agent of Western Union and receive a discount when sending money.

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Philippine Cuisine

Seafood with oyster sauce



Ingredients:

- * 1 kilo of seafood (any one or a combination of crabs, prawns, squid, clams, mussels and any seafood)
- * 1 large onion, diced
- * spring onions (cut 1 inch long)
- * 1 thumb sized ginger, sliced into strips
- * 1/2 teaspoon of sugar or monosodium glutamate
- * 1/3 cup of oyster sauce
- * 2 pieces green finger pepper (sili pag sigang) chopped
- * 3 table spoons of cooking oil or olive oil
- * 1/3 cup water
- * Salt and pepper to taste

Cooking Instructions:

- * Cut crabs into 2 or 4 if very big
- * Steam crabs and prawns for 5 minutes
- * Clean squid and cut into 1 inch long sections
- * On a big wok, sauté garlic until golden brown, then add ginger and onions, sauté for a minute more
- * Add water and bring to a boil
- * Add squid, clams, mussels and other uncooked seafood.
- * Boil for 5 minutes
- * Add crabs and shrimp
- * Add the oyster sauce
- * Salt and pepper to taste
- * Sprinkle the sugar or monosodium glutamate (vetsin)
- * Add the long green chili
- * Mix well and bring to a boil
- * Simmer for 3 minutes
- * Serve hot with steamed rice

Seafood with Oyster Sauce Cooking Tips:

- * Add the long green chili earlier if you prefer your mixed seafood with oyster sauce hot.
- * The above recipe can be used for just one type of seafood like crabs only or a combination.

Estimated cooking time:
2 hours

Kare Kare Ingredients:

- * 1/2 kilo beef (round or sirloin cut) cut into cubes (for a more traditional kare kare, use cleaned beef tripe instead of beef)
- * 1/2 kilo oxtail, cut 2 inch long
- * 3 cups of peanut butter
- * 1/4 cup ground toasted rice
- * 1/2 cup cooked bagoong alamang (anchovies)
- * 2 pieces onions, diced
- * 2 heads of garlic, minced
- * 4 tablespoons atsuetete oil
- * 4 pieces eggplant, sliced 1 inch thick
- * 1 bundle Pechay (Bok choy) cut into 2 pieces
- * 1 bundle of sitaw (string beans) cut to 2" long

Kare-kare



- * 1 banana bud, cut similar to eggplant slices, blanch in boiling water
- * 1/2 cup oil
- * 8 cups of water
- * Salt to taste

Kare Kare Cooking Instructions:

- * In a stock pot, boil beef and oxtails in water for an hour or until cooked. Strain and keep the stock.
- * In a big pan or wok, heat oil and atsuetete oil.
- * Sauté garlic, onions until golden brown, then add the stock, toasted rice, beef, oxtail and peanut butter. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Salt to taste.
- * Add the eggplant, string beans, pechay and banana bud. Cook the vegetables for a few minutes - Do not overcook the vegetables.
- * Serve with bagoong on the side and hot plain rice.

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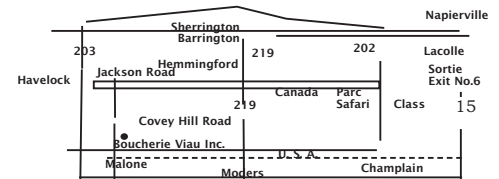
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The North American Filipino Star Photo Gallery



Welcome delegation poses with Honorable Cecilia Seares-Luna upon her arrival, July 14, 2009



Carlito Bade, owner of the Sakura Restaurant poses with the guests, Hon. Cecilia Seares-Luna, Buena Bersoza, and Ben Bade, his brother.



The Mendiola family poses with Congresswoman Cecilia Seares-Luna



(From left): Ms. Seares (sister of the Congresswoman), Albert Bravo, Marlon Bravo, Congresswoman Cecilia Seares-Luna, Magnolia Camat, Marilou Bade-Bravo, Buena Bersoza, and Helen Catacutan.



Part of the big crowd that attended the reception party pose with Hon. Cecilia Seares-Luna (with the corsage),

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all about **Home Business**
by: Jean Janete Aguilar

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countries. So, you can see your eBay business will have a large exposure or audience.

Before you start with an eBay business you should decide if you want to be a full time business or just a part time hobby. Do you want to work from your home or set up an outside office to work from? Do you want to work on your own or do you want to have employees? Do you want to become a Power Seller or a Trade Assistant? It is a good idea to practice some before officially becoming an eBay business. You can try different headlines and descriptions on a small scale. Practice taking pictures and try

will need to supply them with your name, address, telephone number, a credit card and or a checking account. This is used for identification and payment of fees purposes. When setting starting out. If the market for your particular product is saturated, you may want to sell something more. If you make unique crafts, candles or other items, listing your ware will dramatically expand your customer base.

People all over the world shop on eBay and by adding your product to the mix you just might end up selling your homemade quilt to someone in Australia.

Selling information product such as e-books, e-music or how-to-guide can make inventory and fulfillment much easier. Since these items can only take up space on our computer hard drive, it is much easier to handle the post-sale process in eBay. Of course your product needs to provide real value; if words gets around eBay community that your e-book isn't worth the asking price, you won't sell any and it may sully your reputation as a seller.

Dropshipping is a great way to

features, keep in touch with your customers, and also be aware of what your competition is doing.

Learning from mistakes while offering something new and taking your eBay business to its full potential will not only maximizing your earnings to grow but you will also have more fun.

Colby, Monet, Demers, Delage & Crevier, L.L.P. Joins

The International Society of Primerus Law Firms

Montreal, Quebec — The law firm of Colby, Monet, Demers, Delage & Crevier, L.L.P. has been accepted into membership by the International Society of Primerus Law Firms, a highly selective alliance of small to medium-size, independent law firms.

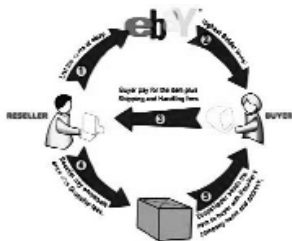
Colby, Monet, Demers, Delage & Crevier is a full service law firm with an emphasis on business. Their bilingual team of lawyers works together, in both English and French, to provide integrated solutions to clients in all facets of their business ventures. Their range of expertise in key areas such as finance, securities, tax, high technology and litigation is geared to ensure their success.

"We are confident that Colby Monet's experience and long time association with the Canadian and Quebec business communities - especially in sectors that transcend North American and international borders such as mining, financing, and mergers and acquisitions - will be of particular value to our new colleagues in Primerus," said David Crevier on behalf of the firm.

Established in Montreal in 1871, Colby Monet has grown with the business community as it has evolved into today's economy of innovation. Still, some values are unchanged. Colby, Monet strives to foster close relationships with their clients through prompt, personalized and straightforward exchanges with them. Colby Monet attorneys see themselves as partners with their clients in fulfilling the mandates entrusted to them by their clients, and their clients can say that they know their lawyers well.

Primerus is a network of approximately 120 top-quality, independent law firms located across the U.S., Canada, and England. Primerus members are vetted and accredited for membership based on their commitment to the following six principles: integrity, excellence of work product, reasonable fee structure, professional education, civility, and community service.

"We are proud to welcome Colby, Monet, Demers, Delage & Crevier to our organization," says John C. Buchanan, president of Primerus. "This firm has not only passed our rigorous screening process, but has distinguished itself as a firm delivering legal services of the highest standards. Clients can be assured that in Colby Monet they



So you are looking to start an eBay Business? Having more than 430,000 people in the United States alone are working full or part time on eBay. It may be easier to start an eBay business than you think. If you feel eBay is just a novelty item or low value trinket type outlet, you should take a look again.

An eBay business can sell anything from trinkets to antiques and automobiles. The five highest categories are automobiles and auto supplies, consumer electronics, computers, clothes and accessories, books, movies and music. eBay was started in 1995 and has become the worlds biggest online auction place selling all kinds of products and services. There is about 1,000 dollars in sales every second. According to recent Google report; there are 135 million registered users in 32



different listing formats. Just sell one or two items at a time at first to get comfortable and confident. This all will make your chances of success much greater when you take your eBay business to the next level.

Getting set up with an eBay business just takes a few minutes. You

sell products on eBay without having to stock them in your home. If you can find a drop shipper / vendor who provides a good product at a price that allows you to make a good profit, you can ask that vendor to ship the product you ordered to ship directly to your customer. However, you will need to make sure that your drop shipper is reliable and has a good reputation which will affect your ability to attract and retain customers.

Before you put something up for sale look to see what similar items sold for and ask, can I make money with this? A key point to remember what ever it is you offer it would need to fill a needs. If your eBay business makes it convenient to buy you have much better chance of success. This means your eBay business should sell like items. If you sell CDs then having CD racks or players would be a good combination. The more compatible items you have on sale the better your chances of success.

After you have gotten comfortable with auction formats, and other aspects of your eBay business remember not to get complacent. You may want to read about any new

moving photos with your own music

Slideshow that you can watch on

- * TV
- * computer
- * You Tube
- * website

www.JASlideshow.com specializes in Photo Slideshow & customized CD/DVD Label



**The Power of
Cooperation**

**1st Principle:
MEMBERSHIP**

One day, I received an email from a friend asking me if government officials, religious leaders, and private company executives could be members of a cooperative - and that is our topic for today.

The 1st cooperative principle defines that membership in a cooperative shall be voluntary, open to all people, and available to all individuals regardless of their social, political, racial and religious background or beliefs.

Though coops are open to everyone, in the Philippines, the Cooperative Code states that employees and any elective officials of the Government shall be accepted as coop members but ineligible to become officers and directors either elected or appointed to any position in a cooperative.

In the past, politicians, private company managers and religious leaders played major roles in building cooperatives worldwide that became big and strong co-op institutions today.

FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In the 1800s, Robert Owen of Great Britain fathered the cooperative movement. He was a cotton factory manager who saw that the people in his factory needed help and he wanted to give them better lives. It was in Scotland where the first co-operative store was opened, owned and managed by members. Owen wanted his people to drag themselves out of poverty.

FROM THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Still in the year 1800s, Friedrich Wilhelm Raffeisen, a mayor of several towns in Germany became a cooperative leader. He conceived the idea of co-operative self-help during his tenure as the young mayor. He was inspired by observing the suffering of farmers who were often in the grip of loansharks.

He was confronted with the miserable poverty of the farmers. He tried to alleviate this need through a variety of charitable activities but later on he realized that self-reliance had more potential in the long run than charitable aid. He therefore converted his charitable associations into farmers' co-operatives.

The works of Raiffeisen inspired both the Caisse Populaire Desjardins of Canada and the Philippine co-operative movement.

FROM THE RELIGIOUS SECTOR

A pastor named Rev. Allen R. Huber

founded the Vigan Credit Union, Inc. in 1938 at Vigan, Ilocos Sur. He first went to the Philippines in 1926 and was exposed to the credit problems of the Filipino farmers. Huber went back to the U.S. to study and later served as a pastor of the First Christian Church, still in the U.S.

He then organized the first Protestant church-based co-operative in the United States. He returned to the Philippines in 1937 and trained Filipinos in organizing and managing co-operatives.

At Sta. Ana Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Davao City, Philippines), a millionaire co-operative with grocery stores which offer financial assistance to its members, as far as I know, was a priest serving as one of the members of the board of directors until today.

The Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII on Christianity and Social Progress entitled Mater et Magistra (Mother and Teacher), issued in 1961, suggests that people should join together in co-operative associations to gain for themselves the benefits and advantages that usually can be gained only from large organizations.

Mater et Magistra mentioned the importance of cooperatives as a vehicle to distribute wealth. Moreover, the Encyclical Letter proposes cooperatives as the means for a more equitable distribution of wealth. Without cooperatives the big private corporations get all the business and all the profits.

COLLABORATION OF GOVERNMENT AND RELIGIOUS SECTORS

Mordino Cua (my former boss), a lawyer and accountant, was a former City Administrator, City Mayor of Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. He spent 50 years of his life in building cooperatives, organizing training centers for cooperative leaders all over the Philippines since the 1960s.

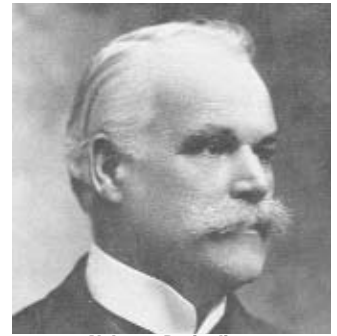
He worked with Rev. Fr. William Masterson, SJ (Dean of Ateneo de Cagayan) in organizing the First Community Cooperative (FICCO), the first coop billionaire in the Philippines.

He also co-authored the Republic Act 6938, which is also known as the Cooperative Code of the Philippines, with Senator Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. President Corazon Aquino signed it into law in 1990 to protect and regulate Philippine co-operatives.

During the early years of the Caisse Populaire Desjardins (Canada), Alphonse Desjardins, the founder, collaborated with several priests and government officials. He asked advice

and approval from the Archbishop of Quebec. One day, the Governor of Quebec dropped by the co-op and scrutinized its books of accounts and interviewed Desjardins about its operations. Afterwards, he enrolled as a co-op member of the caisse populaire. He also asked the help of politicians to pass a law that protect and regulate co-operatives in Canada which became the Cooperative Act of Canada.

Indeed, success is possible when people from different fields work together in unison with a common purpose to help themselves as well as others. ■



Alphonse Desjardins
Nov. 5, 1854-Oct. 31, 1920

Alphonse Desjardins honoured as Greatest Canadian Co-operator

Ottawa, June 19, 2009 - Alphonse Desjardins, the father of Canada's caisse populaire movement and founder of Canada's sixth largest financial institution, has been named history's "Greatest Canadian Co-operator" following an online vote by more than 8,000 people across the country.

The Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) announced the winner of the Greatest Canadian Co-operator award at a gala dinner in Ottawa Thursday evening celebrating the 100th anniversary of Canada's organized national co-operative movement. Mr. Desjardins, who died in 1920, was one of 14 pioneers of the Canadian co-operative movement nominated for the award. All 14 were inducted into the virtual Canadian Co-operative Hall of Fame, which was launched at Thursday's event.

Mr. Desjardins, born to impoverished parents in 1854, established North America's first co-operative savings and loan society - a caisse opulaire, or "people bank" - in Levis, Quebec inn 1900 as an alternative to commercial banks that charged exorbitant interest rates to farmers and workers. His example inspired the creation of credit unions across Canada and the United States and today, Desjardins Group is Canada's sixth largest financial institution. It is also the largest co-operative organization of any kind in Canada, based on turnover, and teh 33rd largest co-opiative in the world.

CCA launched the Hall of Fame project in an effort to hour Canadians past and present who have made a significant contribution to the Canadian co-operative sector. Co-operators and supporters across the country were asked to nominate deceased individuals who had made an important historical contribution to the movement, then vote online for the Greatest Canadian Co-operator. The Hall of Fame, which will be posted on CCA's website www.coopsCanada.coop later this summer, will also include past, present and future winners of CCA's two awards for living co-operators, the Canadian Cooperative Achievement Award and the Global Co-operator Award.

"When we launched this project, we did not anticipate the extent

to which the Greatest Canadian Co-operator award would capture the interest and imagination of co-operatives and their members," said CCA President Dave Sitaram, who announced the winner of the competition to more than 200 co-op and credit union leaders Thursday evening. "When the voting closed at the end of April, more than 8,000 people had cast their electronic ballots. Needless to say, we were delighted."

In addition to the Greatest Canadian Co-operator, CCA presented the 2009 Canadian Co-operative Achievement Award to Glen Tully, President of Saskatoon-based Federated Co-operatives Limited. The award honours outstanding individual contributions to the co-operative movement in Canada.

The 2009 Global Co-operator Award, which honours an individual who has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to CCA's work in international co-operative development, was presented to Olha Zaverucha Swyntuch of Mississauga, Ontario for her successful efforts to develop credit unions in Ukraine during the 1990's.

Contact:

Donna Balkan, Communications Manager
Canadian Co-operative Association
613-238-6711, ext. 206
Cell: 613-314-1032
communications@coopsCanada.coop
Visit our website at
www.coopsCanada.coop.

The Canadian Co-operative Association is a national association of co-operatives in Canada, representing more than nine million co-operative and credit union members from over 2,000 organizations. CCA members come from many sectors of the economy, including finance, insurance, agri-food and supply, wholesale and retail, housing, health and the service sector. CCA provides leadership to promote, develop and unite co-operatives and credit unions for the benefit of people in Canada and around the world.

**Philippine Association
of Montreal & Suburbs
(FAMAS)**

August 9th 2009
Elections

Van Horne Park
(metro plamondon,
Exit Van Horne)

VOTE!!!

Mabuhay! "Team Natin'to"

Kapit-Bisig tungo sa Kaunlaran, Kapayapaan at Kinabukasan
Together towards progress, peace and a better tomorrow

**To develop the FAMAS Community Centre into a
centre every Filipino-Canadian could be proud of.**

Create a welcoming and user-friendly atmosphere to serve as a one-stop resource/information centre.

Introduce programs that would cultivate pride of our Filipino heritage among the youth and the old alike, while adopting the existing Filipino Heritage Class for children.

Serve as a welcoming and orientation centre for newcomers.

Explore the possibility of creating a Foundation as a major source of funds; and embark on new ways to raise funds through our peoples' talents and expertise.

Create a management team to administer the affairs of the centre, including fund-raising, and establish and implement a Code of Conduct and Ethics for its proper use.

Spearhead efforts in convincing existing groups to take ownership and contribute financially towards a bigger centre that will meet the unique needs of our growing community.

Create a FAMAS website to develop awareness of the centre's existence, its programs and services.

- Promote participation, inclusiveness, and volunteerism among our members.

- Introduce and adopt policies and statutes to ensure a culture of good governance, accountability and respect for the dignity of every one.

- Build strong relationships with all levels of government - Municipal, Provincial and Federal - to ensure Filipino community's visibility, representation and due consideration in all areas of decision and policy making.

- Reach out and work with other existing community groups to address common goals, aspirations, concerns and issues.

- Pave the way for greater involvement among young adults and youth.

**The generation we used to
call our "future" is here and now!**

Au Osdon for President

For Directors:

**Dr. Gene Santander
Ramon Vicente Jr.
Melle Lugod
Shinette Khoury
Joan Junio**

**Gina Medina
Anton Fernandez
Terry Esguerra
Erwin Fausto
Debbie Resurreccion**

Tinag Mula Sa Puso • Action From the Heart



ABS-CBN's Gabby and Gina Lopez named 2009 Outstanding Manilans



ABS-CBN Chariman & CEO Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez

ABS-CBN Chairman and CEO Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez III and ABS-CBN Foundation Managing Director Regina "Gina" Lopez were proclaimed Outstanding Manilans in an awarding ceremony held at The Manila Hotel last June 24.

Mr. Lopez was named Outstanding Manilan for Telecommunications and Broadcasting for dynamic leadership of ABS-CBN, the country's largest multimedia conglomerate. Through ABS-CBN, he was cited for having provided Filipino professionals and

workers meaningful livelihood and promoted public welfare through imparting objective news and information.

Ms. Lopez, on the other hand, was recognized as Outstanding Manilan for Environmental Advocacy for her creative and indefatigable efforts to better the environment such as the Pasig River clean-up campaign "Kapit Bisig Para sa Ilog Pasig" and her initiatives for waste management and environment conservation which all "redound to the benefit of Manila."

She was also noted for "her sincere love and concern for underprivileged Filipino youth" with the establishment of the 'Children's Village' and her active participation in ABS-CBN Foundation's life-changing projects like Bantay Kalikasan, Bantay Bata 163, and the Bayan Foundation.

Manila City mayor Alfredo Lim personally awarded the Lopezes during the awarding ceremony also attended by other honorees from other fields.

The Lopez siblings' twin recognitions only prove how ABS-CBN is committed to public service and nation-building as much as it is dedicated to broadcasting excellence. The awards are part of the celebration of the 438th anniversary of the City of Manila and given annually to recognize and award men and



ABS-CBN Foundation managing director Gina Lopez

women who have contributed extraordinary and invaluable to the benefit and development of the City of Manila and its people and whose achievements have substantially contributed to the honor and prestige of Manila as the country's capital.



VOTE

LINGKOD BAYAN TEAM

Change for a better Community Service

For DIRECTORS

*From left: Estela Bajoyo, Helen Racuya, Neil Castro, Loreto Acebedo
Ruben Majaducon, Hele Catacutan, Portia Madriaga*

MEL DOMINGO
for FAMAS President

Boy Pimentel
for Director

Vangie Visario
for Director

Lily Penida
For Director (no photo available)

FILIPINO STAR SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

**An evening of great blues
with Carolyn Fe August 26
at Petit Campus**



Carolyn Fe

Carolyn Fe will be in top form on Wednesday, August 26 at Petit Campus, performing songs from her current EP 'Carolyn Fe 100%'. Songs from the recording have been getting airplay on 97.7 CHOM FM's *Black Cat Alley* with Randy Renaud and 91.9 FM *Planète Jazz*, as well as on online radio stations. On both www.mohawk-radio.com and www.radiorockcafe.com, her songs remain in the Top 5 of their hit list.

Stretching her versatility to the max, Carolyn Fe, produces only original material with phrasing that at once evokes Janis Joplin begging for love, the hard-core, in-your-face strength of Tina Turner or the dreamy allure of Cowboys' Margo

Timmins. Until now, fans have enjoyed Carolyn Fe in a duo or trio format but this time, Carolyn Fe rocks the house with a full band. Fans will be in for a full out Blues treat. She is backed by veteran musicians who've played with the likes of Percy Sledge, Freddie James and Carol Franklin (Aretha's sister).

Carolyn Fe is thrilled to be playing Petit Campus after having to cancel various shows in June and July due to illness, including playing before an audience of 5000 at a fundraiser for Cancer at Parc de Maisonneuve, a recent show celebrating 2009 Martin Luther King Award Winner Ethel Bruneau at Bourbon St. West, and various festivals and gigs around

Quebec.

What they had to say about Carolyn Fe:

"It's been a really long time since I've listened to Black Cat Alley and let me tell you, with this recession and job cuts happening everywhere, a good does of the blues really chases the clouds away. I'm sitting here in the middle of a mess of boxes and cannot get a tune out of my head. I checked CHOM's website and playlist. Indigo Heat, by Carolyn Fe is an amazing song. This lady has a haunting voice. I hope you play more of her songs in your upcoming shows." - Alison

"I saw this lady play live a couple of months ago doing an acoustic gig at a small bar on Bishop Street. She has quite a stage presence and pipes to back it up. It's a pleasant surprise to hear her on air. Please keep playing her songs. Long Live CHOM's Black Cat Alley!" - Max

"Il y a quelques jours que mes amis m'avaient suggéré d'acheter le CD de Carolyn Fe, chanteuse de blues Montréalaise. Je n'étais pas sûr car je ne la connaissais pas. Maintenant que tu me l'as introduit via Black Cat Alley, je suis certaine que mon achat ne serait pas perdu. Merci beaucoup de l'avoir introduit cette dame avec une voix onctueuse. C'est toujours un plaisir d'entendre du blues qui est très près de nous ici à Montréal." -Mélanie

"Last night during your show, Black Cat Alley, you played a female artist. I've never heard of her before. Caroline Fe? What a smoky voice she has! Can you play more of her tunes?" -Alain

Carolyn is a talented performer who wears many hats: actress, singer and producer (more info: www.carolyn-fe.com).

As a singer, Carolyn co-founded the band DD Swank (myspace.com/ddswank) and fronted for them under the pseudonym of Mama B, singing in French, English

and Spanish. Through song, the band told stories of the life of DD Swank, the elusive lady of the early 1900s. However the urge to do something on her own tugged strongly at her heartstrings.

With influences as diverse as Tom Waits, Patsy Cline and Blind Lemon, it is no surprise that Carolyn Fe's singing style reflects a wide range of genres, all of which she effortlessly slides into, seamlessly morphing from the sweet, purity of a Holly Cole to the raunchy rock and roll edge of Tina Turner. Her acting experience gives her the unique ability to infuse lyrics with highly charged emotions. Likely a left-over from her days as a hooper, Carolyn Fe truly marches to her own beat, with percussion taking the lead in her unconventional treatment of music, able to transform a gospel into steamy jazz or fusing native and blues rhythms.

What, When, Where:

Wednesday, August 26, 2009

Petit Campus, 57 Prince Arthur St. East

Doors open at 8pm

Tickets: 8\$ advanced sales, 10\$ at the door (plus taxes and service charge)

Tickets can be purchased directly at Petit Campus Box Office (you can save a few dollars on the service charge), 514 844-1010 or At Admissions: www.admissions.ca, 514 790-1245

The EP, Carolyn Fe 100%, is available at Archambault Musique store on Berri and Ste. Catherine in the blues section or can be ordered online at www.cdbaby.com/carolyne.

The EP will be on sale at the show for 7\$ each.

For further information, or to interview Carolyn Fe, please contact Carolyn at: 514-935-7277 ext 104 or c@carolyn-fe.com

The one and only Vilma Santos makes a comeback on TFC's 15th anniversary



Vilma Santos

Multi-awarded actress, public servant, supermom and loving wife, the one and only Ms. Vilma Santos, makes a comeback on The Filipino Channel (TFC).

In celebration of its 15th year of service, the leading all-Filipino network presents "Vilma: A Woman For All Seasons" this August.

Catch this rare television event on the following TFC platforms worldwide: cable, direct-to-home satellite, IPTV and online. ■

Sarah Geronimo regrets that she will never see Michael Jackson perform



Sarah Geronimo

Sarah Geronimo's dream to perform with Michael Jackson or to see him perform live has vanished with the death of the King of Pop. She confessed at a recent press conference that she got emotional upon learning of the death of the music icon. "Nung bata pa po ako, pangarap ko talaga na makasama siya mag-perform sa stage. 'Yun talaga ang ultimate dream ko kasi naging influence siya sa akin sa pagkanta, sa aking career," revealed Sarah.

Michael was supposed to embark on a world tour in July 2009 and Sarah revealed that she was planning to watch one of his concerts. The Pop

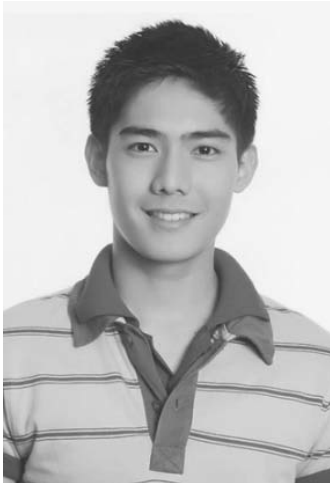
Princess shared that back in 1996, she had asked her father if they could watch Michael's Philippine concert, but unfortunately they had failed to catch it. "Iyak ako ng iyak [noon.] Sabi ko talaga pagtanda ko manonood talaga ako ng concert ni Michael Jackson kahit anong pagtanda ko. Tapos heto na nga po, finally magkakaroon na siya ng world tour. Talagang looking forward na po talaga ako," she said.

She was deeply affected about Michael's death because her dream is gone. "Masakit po na tanggapin, iyak po ako ng iyak," she related. "Pero ganun po talaga. Sabi nga po nila, may

dahilan po si Lord kung bakit kinuha na niya ang King of Pop at ginustong makasama siya."

What she liked most about Michael is the way he interacted with his fans during his concerts. "Parang hindi siya performer lang. Kasi po si Michael Jackson 'yung connection niya po sa audience, sa bawat tao, iba po talaga. Hindi lang basta nagpe-perform lang onstage for the sake of performing," she related. "Di po ba 'yung iba nagpe-perform ng walang puso? Si Michael 'yun pa lang pong interaction niya sa audience 'yung pakikipag-usap niya sa bawat nanonood sa kanya eh iba, kung kaya nako-conquer niya ang venue." ■

Robi Domingo: 'Goodbye Kim Chiu, hello Sarah Geronimo' Marian Rivera and Dennis Trillo paired anew in 'Tarot'



Robi Domingo

Sarah Geronimo is halfway through her The Next One concert tour around the Philippines and it has been a huge success so far. Many people just couldn't help but admire her wholesome personality and undeniable talent once she takes center stage. More so for Robi Domingo, who shares that being one of her special guests in her out-of-town shows is definitely an exhilarating experience. "She's really nice, very perky, and upbeat. Hindi ko alam kung nasa Zamboanga ba kami nun pero minention niya yung name ko during her concert. Sabi niya, 'Ang cute-cute naman ni Robi!' [after ata nung dance number ko]. 'Di ba parang, sabihin lang niya yung pangalan mo, tapos magbigay ng ganung klaseng comment, grabe talaga yung feeling,' he says in an interview with ABS-CBN.com.

Since the adorable Giggerboys member has already learned some great moves in the dance floor, he is looking forward to the day when they could finally perform a dance showdown together on ASAP or any other outside event. "Sobrang enjoy ako dun sa concert niya. Just standing with Sarah onstage or kahit

katabi ko lang siya, it's a great privilege already. How much more kung makasama ko pa siyang mag-perform on the dance floor. Iba yung impact na yun,' he reveals. Does this mean he prefers Sarah now over his longtime crush Kim Chiu? 'Ngayon since si Kim busy kay Gerald, Sarah na muna. Although Rayver Cruz, John Lloyd Cruz, at Mommy Divine ang mga kalaban natin diyan,' he jokingly adds.

Apparently, Robi is done courting a non-showbiz girl whom he has set his eyes on way before his stint on Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition Plus. But if there's one girl who's being romantically linked to him these days, it's no other than his former Boystown co-star Jessie Mendiola. Apparently, they were once spotted in a restaurant near ABS-CBN looking like a sweet couple an occasion which the young heartthrob didn't deny. 'Hindi na ako magtatago. Pumunta kami sa Bannaple kasi sabi ko kay Jessie, 'Have you tried out Bannaple in Tomas Morato' Kasi sa Katipunan meron.' Papatikim ko sana yung the infamous Banoffee pie. [Nung pinaalam ko sa] mommy niya, okay naman daw. So pinatikim ko sa kanya yung pies nila dun,' he explains.

When prodded about the real score between them, Robi admits that Jessie is his number one celebrity crush at the moment and a romance between them is certainly possible. 'Naku, kino-corner ninyo ako ha! Maaari, since we're really really close. We're good friends, kami ni Jessie. Of course we see each other every ASAP. Look at that face [points at a picture of Jessie on the internet] Sino hindi main-love diyan?' he stresses. 'She's very nice, she's got looks, wit, I am single and she's single, so why not?' ■



Marian Rivera and Dennis Trillo will fight against the curse of fortunetelling cards in the upcoming Regal films movie Tarot.

Marian Rivera and Dennis Trillo paired anew in TarotYES! Magazine's most beautiful, Marian Rivera, is currently doing a horror film under Regal Films titled Tarot. Sources say that this Jun Lana film will open in November.

Tarot is the second movie of Marian with Dennis Trillo after they were paired together in the 2006 movie Pamahiin. ABS-CBN star Roxanne Guinoo also joins this movie as part of their love triangle.

Marian will be playing the role of Cara, a woman who has the ability to read Tarot cards.

As a child, Cara was able to predict two deaths in her family by reading her grandmother's Tarot cards. She soon realizes that the Tarot cards may have unleashed a curse. And in order to prevent the onslaught of misfortune, Cara must unlock the secret behind the Tarot's deadly powers. She struggles to find a way to save her fiancé Miguel (Dennis) by tapping the gift passed on to her by her grandmother (played by Gloria Romero).

When PEP (Philippine Entertainment Portal) saw Marian during the birthday party of Roselle Monteverde last July 14, she described her role in the movie.

"Actually, may kakayahan akong manghula dito. Dapat ikakasal na kami

ni Dennis dito pero maraming nangyari. So marami siyang twist dahil sa Tarot, dahil sa lola ko, at mabilis yung pacing," said Marian.

"Si Roxanne best friend ko siya at may hindi kanais-nais na mangyayari sa kanila ni Dennis!"

In a separate interview, Dennis revealed more about his character named Miguel. "Girlfriend ko si Marian na may gift na nakikita niya kung sino ang mamamatay sa pamamagitan ng tarot cards niya. May mangyayari sa akin sa gubat at 'yon ang aalamin kung ano ang gagawin ni Marian. Second time na naming direktor ni Marian si Jun Lana."

Show me the Manny

Marian also confirmed that she and Pambansang Kamao, Manny Pacquiao, will be doing a sitcom titled Show Me The Manny. The female Kapuso star admitted that this upcoming show is very different from the usual romantic shows that she has been doing in the past.

"More on comedy siya, nakakatawa talaga siya hindi more on love scene. Parang dito lababas yung pagka-komedyante ko, ganon din siya. So, pinagsama kaming dalawa," said Marian.

How does it feel about working with the People's Champ?

"Actually, first time at never pa akong nakapanood ng actual laban niya. Excited din ako na makasama siya, at ang pagkakaalam ko pinili pa yata ako ni Ms. Jinkee [Manny's wife] para makasama ni Pacquiao, so thankful ako."

Aling Dionisia, Pacquiao's mom, is also said to be joining the said sitcom.

They are scheduled to begin taping for Show Me The Manny during the latter part of July.

If Pacquiao invites her to watch his fight on October, Marian guaranteed that she'll definitely watch it if she has no any prior commitments for that day. Will she ask Dingdong Dantes to watch with her?

"Kung walang trabaho, sige manonood ako. Kung pwede siya [Dingdong] at pwede ako, bakit hindi? Pwede siguro kaming dalawa." ■

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.19***Viewers are curious of Maricar****Hayden Kho & Maricar Reyes**

You'd think that now that the Hayden Kho's sex video scandal is already in the courts, with no less than the NBI investigating it, those who upload his videos on the internet will be scared enough to do any more mischief. But new sex videos of the notorious randy doctor continue to be uploaded. The latest ones include another foreign model and a new one featuring Maricar Reyes.

This is actually Maricar's fourth video, making her the one with most number of videos in Hayden's personal collection. Obviously, those who are doing this are not at all afraid that they might get arrested. Are they really courting the ire of our law enforcers or they just want to show that they can get away with impunity?

Unlike Katrina who is now all out in the offensive in fighting and suing all her perceived opponents, Maricar took the opposite technique. She just kept totally quiet and ABS-CBN is very protective of her to make sure not even their own writers can interview her. They just gave her more acting assignments and it paid off as she got much praise

for her fine portrayal of a "taong grasa" in "May Bukas Pa."

She now also plays the other woman in "Gaano Kita Kamahal" and the show rated high last Sunday afternoon, which means a lot of people are really curious to see her acting on screen. Those who got to see her in the show say she looks so innocent on screen that you wouldn't suspect she's capable of doing the things she did to Hayden in bed in the video.

ABS-CBN's play of making her just keep quiet is certainly working to her advantage. They're probably all just hoping that things will cool off by themselves and the public will eventually forget Maricar's involvement in the sex video scandal. At the rate the wheels of justice grind so exceedingly slow in this country, we won't be surprised if Katrina Halili herself would later lose interest in the cases she filed and just charge it all to experience. Imagine, up to now, they still cannot pinpoint where the uploading of the sex videos originated and yet more videos are being filed on the net, making our authorities so inutile indeed. ■

Will it be Willie or Marco for Precious Lara?**Precious Lara Quigaman**

Former Miss International Precious Lara Quigaman is currently being linked to two very disparate guys: hunk Marco Alcaraz and TV host Willie Revillame. If it's good looks she's after, then no doubt her final choice would be Marco as he's tall, dark and handsome. But everyone knows Willie is very rich as he really flaunts his wealth, so if she's after financial stability, her choice would no doubt be Willie, even if he's not tall, dark and...never mind.

At the presscon of "Pitik Bulag," Marco's first starring role, he was asked about Lara and he admits that they do go out a lot. "We're just enjoying each other's company," he says. "It was Valerie Concepcion, her co-host in 'Wowwee,' who introduced us to each other. Nameet ko na siya noon, but she still had a boyfriend din kaya never kong niyayang lumabas kami. Now, when we're both not busy, we go out."

So are they on? "No, wala lang. Basta we hang out. Kabe-break lang niya, so it'd be difficult for her to get into another relationship right away. Kaya hindi ko rin siya minamadali, basta enjoy lang kaming magkasama."

What has he discovered about her so far?

"Kasi international beauty queen siya, so you'd think maarte siya, but she's actually very down to earth pala. Kalog nga siya, e. Masayang kasama."

What can he say about reports that Willie is also after her?

"We're just enjoying naman each other's company. Masama ba 'yun? I haven't really courted her formally."

Will he show Lara his nude scenes in "Pitik Bulag"?

"Why not? Maganda naman 'yung movie and my role is good. I'd be proud na ipapanood ito sa kanya."

Going back to Lara, it'll be recalled that she was once fired from "Wowwee" when she took her non-showbiz boyfriend with her when they did a show in the US and Willie was against this. But now, she's back in the show. It's said it's Willie who requested to call her back, causing his 19-year-old girlfriend called Nadine (a Centro Escolar student) to get jealous and break up with him.

"Honestly, wala akong kinalaman diyan," says Precious on the set of "May Bukas Pa." "Nagagalit nga yung ibang friend daw nung girl at pinadadalhan ako ng hate mail, but the truth is I really don't know anything about it. I don't mean to hurt anyone so kung totooong break na sila, please don't take it against me. My return to 'Wowwee' is just a job. Trabaho lang. They say Willie gives me special treatment, but it's not true. Pantay-pantay lang ang tingin niya sa aming co-hosts niya. He did give me a watch, pero binigyan niya rin 'yung iba pang kasama namin, pati si Pokwang."

So is Willie really making "porma" to her?

"Ganun naman talaga siya sa girls na kasama niya sa show. Parang nililigawan niya lahat at mahirap sabihin kung totoo ba or he's just joking. But in my case, sa tingin ko, hindi naman kasi sa show lang kami nagkikita. After that, wala na. He doesn't even text or call me. So hindi siya seryoso, 'di ba?"

But if ever he'd woo her earnestly, how will she respond to him?

"Sorry but for me, he's just really a big brother. Kuya lang talaga ang tingin ko sa kanya. He'll always be a kuya to me. Ganun lang. So tiligan na yang pag-i-link sa'min."

How about Marco?

"Friend din lang siya. Hindi naman siguro masama magkaroon ng lalaking friend. Dito kasi sa'tin, pag nakita kayong magkasama, they conclude right away na kayo na. Basta sa ngayon, friends lang kami." ■

Anne still pining for Sam?**Anne Curtis**

Has Anne Curtis moved on after her break-up with Sam Milby?

Obviously, yes! But not completely. Not yet.

In an interview during the presscon for her new series, "The Wedding," which pairs her with two leading men, Derek Ramsey and Zanjoe Marudo, Anne confessed that among her boyfriends, she thought Sam would have made the perfect husband.

She hopes, though, that her disclosure would not be mistaken as a desire for her to reconcile with Sam.

Far from it, she stresses, as she is now entertaining suitors. One of whom is the brother of Derek's former girlfriend.

The guy is a foreigner, just like Sam, who hails from Ohio, and has an American dad and a Filipino mom.

Meanwhile, Anne is enjoying her freedom. ■

Are they or aren't they?**Ruffa Gutierrez**

Are they or aren't they? Despite their repeated denials, rumors about the Ruffa

Gutierrez-John Lloyd Cruz romance persist. We thought they'd be avoiding each other to stop wagging tongues but there are repeated sightings of them being together while they were in the US. And this time, it's said that Ruffa's mama, Annabelle Rama, no longer objects to the match after she met John Lloyd and talked to him, specifically warning him: "Huwag mong lolokohin ang anak ko, hah!"

They were seen having dinner. They were shown entering a plush hotel at Beverly Hills, just the two of them. No wonder Ruffa got evasive when her co-hosts in "The Buzz," Boy Abunda and Kris Aquino, were talking to her on the phone and asked her about John Lloyd. Will this be another case of movie stars admitting that they indeed were on only after they've broken up? What else is new? ■

Angel turns down movie team-up with Sharon



Angel Locsin

Actress Angel Locsin was overwhelmed that Megastar Sharon Cuneta had chosen her to be part of her upcoming film "Mano Po6: My Mother" under Regal Films.

However, in an interview during the Thanksgiving Party for "Only You," Locsin said doing the "Mano Po" film with Cuneta would not be possible since she has an exclusive contract with ABS-CBN's movie outfit, Star Cinema.

"Kasi exclusive po ako sa Star Cinema so medyo mahirap na po dahil may usapan na pong legal," Locsin said.

The actress said although it would be impossible for her to be in "Mano Po," she divulged that she and the megastar will star in a film produced

by Star Cinema.

"Pero alam ko po ay mayroong niluluto ang Star Cinema na magkaroon kaming proyekto ni Tita Sharon," Locsin said.

Locsin, whose last movie with Star Cinema was "Love Down Under," is slated to make two films that will be directed by award-winning filmmakers Cathy Garcia Molina and Chito S. Roño. Reports also said that Locsin will be paired with seasoned actor Aga Muhlach in one of her upcoming films.

Peace mission

Locsin, meanwhile, divulged her short trip in troubled Munai town in the province of Lanao del Norte recently. The actress, accompanied by her four friends, went to Mindanao after a month of planning. They said they went to the area without any security detail to personally witness the condition of the residents who continue to suffer due to the ongoing conflict in the southern Philippines.

She said she and her friends mingled with the locals while wearing a veil.

"Hindi ko alam ang mangyayari sa akin doon pero nandoon na. Nakita ko ang kalagayan [nila]... wala na silang lupa kasi ginawa ng kampo or pinasabog na iyong mga bahay nila," Locsin said.

She added: "Gusto ko lang malaman niyo ang kalagayan ng mga tao doon. Huwag niyo silang katakutan. Puntahan niyo at alamin niyo kung bakit ganoon [ang kalagayan nila at tulungan natin ang mga naiipit sa giyera." Locsin also appealed to the government to resume the peace talks

to finally end the war in Mindanao.

"Nakita namin iyong sitwasyon. Naawa lang po ako sa mga sibilyan kaya sana ipagpatuloy natin ang peace talks kasi ang appektado talaga ay ang mga sibilyan," she said.

Locsin, who was reported to be the granddaughter of one of the sultans in Mindanao, kept her silence on what kind of help she extended to the people she met in the evacuation centers.

The "Only You" star quickly shot down speculation that the trip was connected to her alleged plan to run in next year's elections. She maintained that helping underprivileged Filipinos is just her way of sharing her blessings. ■

Isabel Oli won't mix with Paolo Contis



Isabel Oli

Is it true Isabel Oli backed out

from being the Babaeng Tuod, one of Marian Rivera's opponents in "Darna," because she wants to avoid working with ex-boyfriend Paolo Contis and with former friend Nadine Samonte with whom she had a tiff? She's replaced by Krissa Mae Arrieta, the new squeeze of singer Jay-R.

"It's true I begged off from the show, pero hindi naman yun ang reason," she says. "Wala akong problema working with Paolo again. We've both moved on after we broke up and we can be friends. I wish him well and his new girlfriend. As for Nadine, it's not true sumama ang loob ko sa kanya at siya ang pinagbibintangan kong nagtsismis noon about our vacation in Boracay. The truth is gusto ko ngang magkausap na kami para makapagpalawanagan at nang maayos na ito. We worked together in 'Gagambino' at naging friends kami so okay lang sa'kin to work with her again sana in 'Darna.' Kaya lang nga, my dad's health condition is really a problem and I want to spend more time in taking care of him. He really needs me and other family members to look after him. Siempre, priority ko munang asikasuhin ang dad ko. Ang sakit niya is cerebellar degeneration, where neurons in the area of the brain called cerebellum that controls muscle coordination and balance, deteriorate and die kaya bedridden talaga siya ngayon." ■

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Gov't to auction Imelda Marcos jewels



Controversial former First Lady Imelda Marcos won't be seeing the family jewels anytime soon as these would be auctioned to the public, Justice Secretary and concurrent Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera clarified yesterday.

"Of course not! In fact we are proceeding with the public auction with respect to the Hawaii and Roumeliotes collections," Devanadera said as she vehemently denied a news report that the government planned to return to Imelda Marcos, who turned 80 last July

2, two collections of jewels known as the "Hawaii" and the "Roumeliotes."

Devanadera insisted that "there is no need to forfeit the Hawaii and Roumeliotes collections as the ownership of these collections has long been settled."

International auctioneers have pegged the value of the Roumeliotes, Malacañang and Hawaii collections between \$5,313,575 and \$7,112,879.

Meanwhile, an official of the Presidential Commission on Good Government said that while two jewelry collections owned by Mrs. Marcos were indeed excluded from a government forfeiture case, it does not necessarily mean that it would be returned to the former first lady.

PCGG Commissioner for legal affairs Jaime Bautista said the two collections, the Roumeliotes and Hawaii collections, were not included in Civil case 141, since both already belong to the Republic of the Philippines. He added that the Roumeliotes collections were actually seized under the Bureau of Customs Tarrif and Code law, a legal action upheld by the courts of law.

"It was erroneously reported and misinterpreted. It will not be returned to Mrs. Marcos since they belong to the Philippine government already," Bautista said of the two sets of Marcos jewelry.

Devanadera explained that only the

Malacañang collection, the jewels that were found abandoned in Malacañang in 1986 when the Marcoses fled to Hawaii to avoid the people's wrath at the height of a military-backed people power, were left to be forfeited in Civil Case No. 141. "The recovery of these assets will greatly help the government in pursuing its social development programs that will benefit the whole country," she said.

The Hawaii collections were seized from Mrs. Marcos upon arrival in Hawaii and to avoid prosecution there she gave the jewelry as settlement. A US court had accorded the settlement and awarded the jewelry to the Philippine government.

The Roumeliotes collection - the biggest and most expensive of the three sets - was seized from Greek national Demetriou Roumeliotes while he was at the Manila International Airport on March 1, 1986. Roumeliotes was identified as a friend of the Marcos family.

Earlier reports had said that a 20-page motion dated June 24, 2009, which was issued by the Office of the Solicitor General, stated that only a set of jewelry known as the Malacañang collection was mentioned in Civil Case No. 141 and sought partial summary judgment over the Malacañang collection, a motion that prompted a newspaper to misinterpret it as one that would lead to the return of the two sets of jewels to Imelda. ■



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