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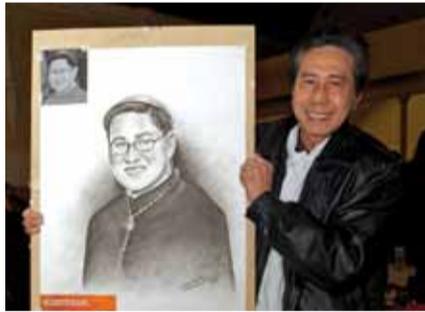
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The Cardinal in Australia



Cardinal Luis Tagle urges Filipinos in Australia to live a dignified life, and bring good to others. **STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGE 14.** Photos by the Archdiocese of Melbourne, George Gregorio, Jess Marasigan, Richard Timbury / Casamento Photography / Kairos Catholic Journal.



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A Musical Theatre Event



SATURDAY

30 AUG 2014

**St Bernadette's
Community Receptions**
21-29 Cooke Avenue
Sunshine North VIC 3020

Door opens > 4.00pm

Admission > From \$25.00

Program

5.00pm

> 2-hour variety Musical Theatre acts from popular songs and a lot more!

7.00pm onwards

> Dinner, Food and Beverage available for sale at the venue. B.Y.O. food and drinks also allowed.

8:00pm

> Special performance from OUR TRIBE band

8.30pm - 11.00pm

> Public dancing

For bookings, contact:

> Chito 0414 061 777

> Susan 0433 600 658

> info@sandokproduction.com

> George 0411 566 885

> Tess 0413 975 646

> www.sandokproduction.com

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Music, dance, dining in Halo-halo festival

THE AEECC Halo-halo festival organised by Sandok Production and named after a popular Filipino dessert halo-halo meaning "mix", will be held at St. Bernadette's Community Receptions on 30 August. The festival will feature an assortment of activities from stage acts to eating to public dancing. "This is akin to themed festivals like comedy festival or film festival. It is a showcase of musical theatre-type or Glee-style production numbers," said George Gregorio, Publicity and Sponsorship Coordinator of Sandok Production.

The gala will start at 5pm and will consist of a two-hour musical variety show followed by dinner and public dancing which will last until midnight. Food and beverages are sold at the venue but attendees are allowed to bring their own food and drinks. Tickets are available for \$25 or \$55 (family of 4).

For more information about the Halo-halo festival, call Chito Javier on 0414 061 777 or send an email to info@sandokproduction.com.



Counterclockwise: Former X-Factor contestants BJ Trillado, Justin Vasquez and Mary Ann Van Der Horst and talented Filipino performer Czarina Lapus will be at the AEECC Global Halo-Halo Festival, along with Harmonico Filipino, C.J. and a lot more.



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Workshop for development trainers held

Ramil Ventus

FRESH from the successful launch of Frontline Foundation on 15 June 2014, founder and CEO Maria Teresa Abadilla flew to the Philippines to conduct a training program titled Community Development Planning Train the Trainer. This program was developed by the Australian Christian Churches (ACC) International Relief in Australia. The workshop was free of charge for local members and ran from 21 to 24 June 2014.

The four-day program aimed to define development as a holistic sustainable change. "The journey to progress begins with empowering a group of people to engage in the process of improving their social, economic, physical, spiritual and environmental situation," said Abadilla.

Participants for this training would be prepared to facilitate planning workshops with target communities which will become the basis for their community development plans. These plans will include future community development



projects which may require funding from NGOs like Frontline Foundation.

"Our basic goal is to train people so they can train others and understand development program as a necessity resonating Frontline Foundation's core values," highlights Jeanette Moody, Projects Head and one of the members who conducted the training alongside Abadilla.

They conducted the workshop in Quezon City, Philippines. A total of 12 benefited from the training and it is expected to exponentially increase as they share their knowledge to their respective communities.

The desired outcome of

the action plan is to empower, build capacity and strengthen the community to take ownership, initiative and responsibility over their own development. Among the skills imparted was training facilitation, understanding of community-driven development planning, breaking down development goals, identifying community assets, and the ability to motivate and address any issues that might arise.

Find out how you can be part of Frontline Foundation's initiatives by logging on to frontlinefoundation.org.au or contacting Maila Ocampo-Reyes at 0421 238 948.

New on-the-spot penalty fares on from 10 August

FARE evasion on public transport has decreased and it's likely you are one of the nine out of 10 passengers that always travel with a valid myki. According to Public Transport Victoria, your fares are an important contribution towards improving the network.

But freeloaders who don't pay their way cost the network \$60 million each year. This money could instead buy four new X'Trapolis trains, 10 E-class trams, 12 VLocity trains or 150 buses.

To ensure that all passengers pay their fair share, PT Victoria increased the number of Authorised Officers, installed new myki barrier gates at stations and introduced new On-the-spot Penalty Fares to enable more ticket checks, more often.

From Sunday, 10 August 2014, passengers without a valid myki may be given the option of paying an On-the-spot Penalty Fare of \$75.

Penalty Fares will not be offered in all circumstances, and the 12-month trial will only be implemented by Authorised Officers on the metropolitan network.

For more information, visit ptv.vic.gov.au/penaltyfares and watch a video outlining the changes.



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EDITORIAL

The colour of love of country

THE RECENT delivery of Philippine President Noynoy Aquino's State of the Nation Address (SONA) on 28 July 2014 became an occasion for display of fashion sense, advocacy and trust in the President. It was yellow for those who are for the President and peach for those who want him impeached. For the employees of the Supreme Court, the colour of their disposition was black, worn every Friday as a sign of protest for the President's so-called assault on the highest court of the land when he challenged its decision declaring the Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) unconstitutional.

How do we express our love of country? Colours seem to define what side one is on, and supposedly what one is fighting for. The problem for us who live abroad, we get a lot of Philippine news from mass media, which when filtered in foreign media leave out mostly the negative side of the story. Social media, on the other hand, seem to provide a more grim view of the country with "insider" stories supposedly from those "in the know". The advantage though, is that social media seems to have served as a more polarized

arena, in which the positive Philippines can still seep into our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. Thanks to that, we are able to share with our world of contacts what can be good about the Philippines.

That we're not a country where thievery is blatant or tolerated even in the hallowed halls of the Senate and Congress, the highest law-making body of the land. That we are also a people of integrity as manifested by the work of the lowliest government employee, a sector which has in media, been bashed as among the most corrupt; or honest cab drivers who are not tempted to pocket money left behind by customers, even if the need can be quite high. That getting a kickback from government projects is more isolated than standard practice in government. Because for every one who steals from government or company coffers, a number of hard-working low-income and middle-income workers pay honest taxes and the droves of OFWs take on double jobs to improve the lives of their families back home. That we are not a people who will skirt around the rule to get benefits, whether for personal or communal

gain. Because while these do not normally grab headline attention, law-abiding citizens who simply follow traffic and pedestrian signs or who queue properly to get to their destinations are still not a thing of the past.

The point is, we see and hear a lot of things about the Philippines, sometimes dominantly the negative. Opinions about our government which represent us are expressed in colours, which in actuality, do not speak of affiliation to convictions or ideologies but more to personalities. So if you're for yellow, you're pro-administration; if red, for the Marcoses and their allies. If you bear peach, you are for the impeachment of the President. Colours have divided our people and has stooped to the level which colour dominates the most air time. And this is how the Philippines has been polarized, not so much in informed opinions but of personalities, and this impedes our growth as a people.

If we genuinely love our country, we should gaze on the colours represented in our Philippine flag, which stand for valour or bravery (red), unity (blue) and peace (white). We should focus on qualities that make us



a great people, and not on colours which make us blind in following leaders who sometimes no longer

represent the values we hold dear. So when someone asks what is the colour of your nationalism, say it's

the colour of our flag, or the neutral white—pure and pristine—quiet yet speaks volumes.

The Philippine Times

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Mabini's 150th birthday celebrated

NSW—The Philippine Consulate General in Sydney commemorated the 150th birth anniversary of Apolinario Mabini, General Emilio Aguinaldo's most trusted adviser, on 26 July 2014. The program featured a tribute to Mabini through songs and poetry. A painting of Mabini done by Ms Daisy Ann Gonzales-Cumming was donated to the National

Historical Commission.

Mabini was born in Tanauan, Batangas on 23 July 1864.



Photos by Jade Cadelina

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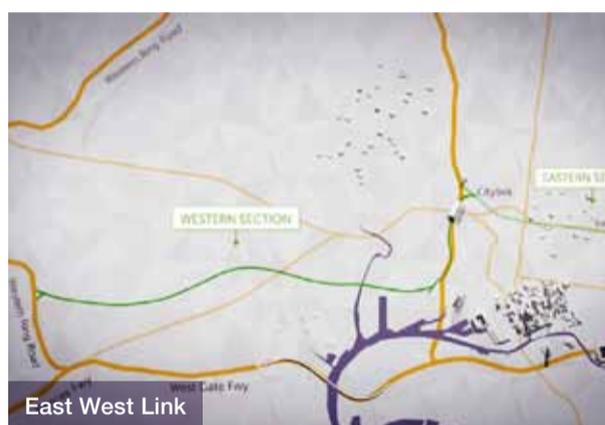
Artistic Impression



Protective Services Officers



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East West Link



CityLink Tulla Widening



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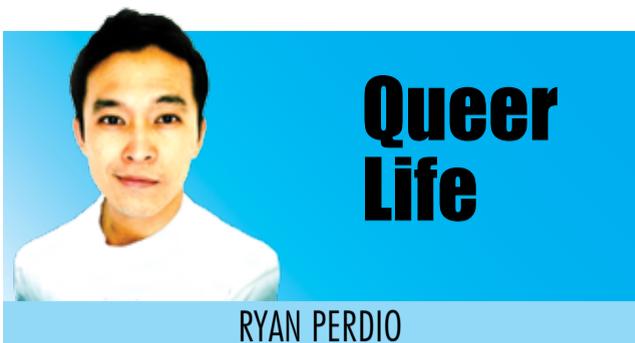
26 level crossing removals and grade separations with planning for 14 more to reduce delays and make trains and roads safer.

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Queer Life

RYAN PERDIO

Meetings and conversations

I HADN'T thought about him since that fateful afternoon, so it was odd that after so many years, he should once again pop into my head.

I should have guessed there was a reason behind it all. Should have known that something was about to unfold. One Saturday evening came in the form of a pretty teenage girl.

"Hi, Ryan. How are you?"

"Um... hello. Do I know you?"

"You don't. But I know you. I'm Lisa. Danny's cousin. And by the way, he says hello."

Danny. That's a name I haven't heard in years.

We were introduced by a mutual friend at a party where there were too many

people and far too many names. In truth, I didn't expect anything to come out of our meeting. Just another de facto acquaintance. Quickly met, soon forgotten.

But Danny left an impression, albeit less than positive. He seemed so brash, so self-assured and so full of himself. It was a clash of personalities. Quietly, I developed an instant dislike of him and he must have sensed it. Our first conversation was short and abrupt.

If it was only that chance meeting then nothing would have been of consequence, but ever since our introduction, he seemed ever-present. He was everywhere I went; at every gathering I attended. There was no

escaping Danny and I found his constant presence grated. Somehow, though, he and I ended up becoming very close.

I can no longer recall how it came about but one evening we found ourselves deep in conversation. Gone was the usual small talk – the people we both knew, the places we both frequented – and in its place were personal questions and revealing insights.

Danny had a challenging childhood. He grew up in a tumultuous Filipino household where a liberal upbringing was stifled and a voiceless existence was encouraged. As a result, he became introspective and developed a steely confidence to mask what really lay beneath: a vulnerable, sensitive individual.

It seemed that once that ice was broken, mutual respect and trust quickly developed between the two of us. We had so many that I've lost count the number of deep and meaningful conversations that followed. Danny was a revelation – sweet, cheeky, very intelligent – and I felt that he understood me as much as I understood him.

And ever so gradually, I felt myself falling for him.

My sexuality was one topic Danny and I hadn't yet talked about, although I had felt he may have sensed

something was different about me. Our conversations never steered down that road, partly because of my fear of losing his friendship, but mostly because I could never find the right moment to tell him. As it turned out, he was the one who gave me the opportunity.

"Ryan, I have to tell you something."

"What is it?"

"I'm leaving. I'm going overseas."

Panic and a sense of loss gripped me.

"How long for?"

"Not sure. A month, maybe two."

A pause. A heartbeat. A moment.

"Okay, Danny. Well, I have something to tell you, too. I'm gay. And I like you."

My eyes bore into him, trying to anticipate his reply.

"I had a feeling," he said.

"To be honest, I kind of feel the same about you. But right now, I'm not really sure how to respond."

Tell me you like me, too, I wanted for him to say. "It's okay, Danny. You don't have to say anything."

"Maybe we can talk about this when I get back?"

"Sure, I'd like that."

He came closer then and kissed me on the forehead. That single act of intimacy was his farewell until our next promised meeting.

I waited to hear from Danny. Days turned into a month then two and then three. Eventually, the months turned into a year and by that time, I had long stopped waiting...

"He says hello," repeated Lisa. We were at another party, a gathering Danny would have otherwise been present at.

She looked a little like him. Same button nose, same coloured eyes. She had his spirit that much was

certain.

"How is he?" I replied rather coolly, trying desperately to hide the excitement that was building.

"He's fine. Still overseas. And he's married."

"Married?" If I sounded a little too surprised then, I didn't make any attempts at hiding it.

"Yes, he's married... and he has a six-month old son."

Lisa looked at me carefully, perhaps trying to read my reaction, much like I did long ago when I made my own revelation to Danny. I didn't flinch nor say a word.

"For what it's worth, Ryan," she said with a kind, knowing smile, "he talks about you a lot."

"I'm sure he does."

But I guess there are just certain things we are simply never going to get the chance to ever talk about.

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FASTCO hosts Pinoy Salu-salo this August

THE FILIPINO Australian Student Council (FASTCO) held a Pinoy Salu-salo last 3 August 2014 at the FCCVI Community House.

Current FASTCO officers are: President Eunice Guzon, Vice-President Anisha Guro, Secretary Diane Claire Jiao, Treasurer Emerose Devilles, Director Academic Support

Chuckie Calsado, Director External PR Raffy Marfori, Director Internal PR Detherina Basilio, and Director IT, Gerard Dimaquila.



Photos by Irma Modesto

New Triskelion officers take oath of office



THE TRISKELION Melbourne Council of Victoria Inc (TMCVI) celebrated its sixth anniversary last 28 June 2014 at Malvern. TMCVI was officially formed last 8 June 2008 by eight members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity who wanted to continue the bond of brotherhood which the Triskelions share in Victoria.



The event was also the venue for the newly-elected officers of TMCVI to take their oath of office and formally turn over from the outgoing officers of 2013. Outgoing President Michael Manlapaz gave a short run-down of the many activities and events which the Triskelions were a part of during his term.

held in Flemington and the first Flores de Mayo held in Ardeer. The Triskelions also assisted in the concerts of various Filipino artists who performed in different venues around Melbourne.

pines and was distributed to the victims through their local provincial chapters.

TMCVI shared its time and resources with the local community through their participation in Tree Planting activity held in Truganina, and Clean Up Australia held in Newport. The Triskelions also participated in the activities initiated by the local Filipino community. They played support roles in the annual Philippine Fiesta

The Triskelions' community service was not only limited here in Australia. They were able to launch their first Balik Eskwela project in the province of Marinduque. Four elementary schools were the initial beneficiaries of bags and school supplies distributed during the schools opening last June 2013. The Triskelions also did their share of extending help to the victims of natural calamities in the Philippines during 2013. TMCVI sent financial assistance back to the Philip-

Ronan Colobong, the incoming president, together with the new Exe-Com and Grand Council members took their oath of office. He committed to continue the tradition of the fraternity and sorority to serve the community and the pursuit of excellence of its members. They started their term with the successful completion of the second Balik Eskwela project which was held in the Bicol Province. More than 300 students received new bags and school supplies to start school year 2014. The Triskelions also participated in the National Tree planting activity in Altona on 27 July 2014.



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Keep Stir-frying!

ASTHER BASCUNA-CREO

A deacon's wife

WHAT does it take to be a deacon's wife? For the six years that my husband Chris was undergoing formation to become a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Melbourne, I must have turned this question around in my head a million times.

I admit that in the day-to-day life, those questions burn a hole in my mind

whenever Chris's commitments result in me getting more than my fair share of housework – or after he had just shared his Gospel reflection at church and I am feeling self-conscious about my own role in his diaconal journey.

As a wife who has known Chris when he was a student activist, a long-haired

journalist, a sleepless new father, a hardworking new migrant production worker, and a grim and determined Theology student, I am constantly amazed at how life ebbs and flows and takes us to the most amazing journeys – journeys that make us realise that the path we have created for ourselves is not often the path that we are to take after all. And that the most amazing things really do happen when we surrender and give up control.

When we became migrants in Australia 10 years ago this year, the one and only agenda we had was to raise our children and claim our share of economic prosperity. With this in mind, Chris worked 12-hour days and I later on also worked fulltime. Through sheer hard work, we bought our brand new house in a new estate after two years. Our two girls were doing okay in

school and Chris and I drove our own cars. Life flowed smoothly, and we settled down to this life and went about our days.

In a series of small life events, the idea for Chris to enquire into the diaconate came around 2008. On the first year of his formation, we both attended sessions held too far in between for me to really be fully committed to the idea. On the second year, Chris enrolled in some part-time Theology classes in between his work. On the third year, I fell pregnant with our baby boy, which we had been wishing for.

For me, this was the crossroads when Chris would either have to give up or postpone his discernment – or proceed with faith. We chose the latter; and despite my apprehension I remember feeling that God has given us our baby boy not to discour-

age us but rather to bless us. Because of this, it was much easier to relinquish control and just let God do his work in our lives.

The diaconate program is a big undertaking and takes a lot of commitment, not just from Chris but from the whole family. The journey has involved some sacrifices, but it has also provided us a lot of blessings. It has changed Chris and me in a lot of ways, and we're still learning, evolving, continuously discovering experiences and connecting with people who have their own life journeys.

Personally, I think what this has given me is courage – the courage of knowing that we've got God on our backs to always prop us up. Truly, in not just one instance, God has delivered miracles in our lives. They're not big earth-moving, sea-parting types of miracles but just the amazing

'coincidence' of small events happening at the right place at the right time that has provided us with an answer at our time of need. When that happens, when the revelation of that miracle hits us, Chris and I go "Wow." We were taken care of yet again. Yet and yet again.

For me, this is the greatest gift I have been given: the realisation that miracles happen – and that they abound in all our lives, whoever we are, despite our own brokenness and imperfections. All we need to do is to recognise them when they come in a shape or form that we didn't expect.

In November, we begin another leg of this journey as Chris, together with Neil Daculan and Danilo Jumong, is ordained to the permanent diaconate at the Archdiocese of Melbourne. For comments or feedback, email asthercreo@gmail.com.

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Casa de Baile means success

ANOTHER Casa de Baile event held last 26 July with 200 guests in attendance was a success. The most awaited entertainment was applauded featuring Roberto's Zumba, dance showcase of bachata, merengue, samba, chacha, waltz, jive, salsa and paso doble. Roberto and Marie, the organisers, promise more entertainment and fun at their biggest event to be held at Grand Star Altona on 13 September.



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Seeing a bit down the road

RECENTLY, I found myself watching an old film, "Evan Almighty" that starred Steve Carell and Morgan Freeman. Steve as Evan Baxter was a Junior Congressman who prayed one night and expressed his wish to the Almighty to "change the world." When God appeared with the perplexing request to build an ark, Evan was sure he was losing it. Everybody around ridiculed him as soon as he started to build the ark. At first he hammered and sawed with fierce resistance, but then left with no choice, he completed it with obedience and surrender. While he was busy assembling, God reminded him that ARK really meant A RANDOM KINDNESS. If one reads the reviews, there

are differing spiritual opinions about the movie.

When God answers us in response to prayer, He can surprise us with the manner He would deliver it and we are left wondering if it was a reply to a prayer or a further challenge for more trial. They say "be careful of what you wish for."

One day, I woke up feeling that I wanted to spend the next part of my life serving the Lord deeper, in ways that would allow me to reach out to those who need more help. In prayer, I expressed this to God. The answer came as a desire to give up my city work which I have done for 30 years. Suddenly I was confronted by the irregularity of my day, the uncertainty of a steady

income. However, I was also blessed with the "freedom" to do what I love to do and enjoy a much more fulfilling and purposeful life.

Today, I am meeting more people through my counseling. Listening and sometimes working out solutions to issues they are otherwise helpless about has given me the inspiration to get up every day and ask God to send me where He wants me most. These encounters have become a test for me to become more understanding of human conditions. And best of all, they have moved me to trust God more deeply, fully depending on Him for wisdom, strength, abundance and supply of my daily needs. It is indeed a humbling but grace-filled time.

My mobile screen saver is one of Joel Osteen's spiritual verses: "TRUST IN GOD: We only see a little bit down the road, but He can see around the curve." On my desk, I also get reminded when I get low in courage: "Depend on it-God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supplies."

Living life true to oneself is different things to different people. I realise though that life is short and I really need not "waste" my own, by wishing away those whisperings that God has placed in my heart.

(For comments or feedback, email evamarie09@bigpond.com).

AMSSG avail government-funded computer training

Fe Gillies

ON 3 July 2014, 21 Australian Multicultural Senior Support Group members filled up application forms as requisite to be students once again. The program will run for 38 weeks. Laptops, internet and all the necessary paraphernalia will be provided. This qualification provides the skills and knowledge for individuals to be competent in a wide range of ICT and technical functions, and to achieve a degree of self-sufficiency as an advanced ICT user. Persons working at this level will support information technology

activities in the workplace across a wide range of ICT areas, including technical support, network administration, web technologies software application and digital media technologies. Representative from National

Training Centre of Australia (NTCA) Deepak Kumar was already answering questions from senior members. "If you can't travel to the city to do this course, then NTCA will travel to your venue to make it happen."



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jojir08degamo@yahoo.com
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GWU celebrates 8th year

Nancy Bucao

IT was a successful event for the God with Us, Mulgrave Satellite as it celebrated its eighth victorious year of being together as a church family. The event, which was held for the first time at Amberlee Receptions in Cranbourne was a blessed celebration that featured Gospel and prayer sharing by guest speaker Ps Joel Pinga, an ordained Minister of Australian Christian Churches and senior pastor of Harvest Church, Waverley.

We called our eighth anniversary Anniversary 'Vic-

torious' because we truly are! Despite trials, we did not stop believing. God has given us so much courage to celebrate, and as Ps Joel proclaimed, "Believing, obeying and trusting Jesus Christ is what makes us overcomer of the world."

The celebration also featured special song and dance numbers mostly by the GWU Mulgrave members rendering a folk dance (one of the Pinoy's pride) performed by the three beautiful ladies: Mariflor, Malu and Rosana followed by a song number titled, "Hallelujah". We also have the support of the participating churches: God

with Us Main and Ambassadors of Christ Fellowship by contributing special song numbers. There was also a talent show which consisted of a solo by Rona dela Cruz, duets by brother and sister Monique Kim and Ps Jay and Anne, and a solo dance imitation of Michael Jackson by Josiah de la Cruz.

The event's dance finale made everyone participate with fun and laughter with the Aussie favourite dance at every party that young and old folks want to learn—the 'Line Dancing'. It was indeed a successful and joyful celebration for everyone who attended.



AMSSG hosts Christmas in July

Fe Gillies

THE AUSTRALIAN Multicultural Senior Support Group (AMSSG) had a time out to enjoy Christmas in July after a hectic schedule. The members visited four aged care facilities and performing some cultural dance. Celebrating Christmas in July is just like how they would celebrate it in December—exchanging gifts with one another, singing Christmas songs beneath a Christmas tree with lighted candles and sharing a well-prepared dinner. The group had time to enjoy with some parlour games and dancing before resuming their normal schedule.



ACME Second Anniversary and 2014 Awards Night

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Sibling love carries him through

THIS IS the story of George Abenoja, mid 40's, man of many talents and experiences, determined to make a difference in his community.

George greets friends, old and new, with a bright smile and happy demeanor. He describes his life before his diagnosis as "very colourful". At the age of 21, George attained Australian citizenship and was building a career in IT. He was balancing his job working for a transport company with his studies, and he always found time for friends.

Never afraid of a challenge, George moved to the United States for a new business venture, and when his opportunity didn't come to fruition, he returned to Australia. This was a difficult time and was ultimately the catalyst for a significant career change. Deciding he no longer wanted to work in IT, George began a new career chapter as a personal carer. George thoroughly enjoyed this work, which is symbolic of his giving nature.

When he was aged 38, George's health began to decline. Initially, doctors struggled to find an explanation for the deterioration in George's health and it seemed that a di-

agnosis was unlikely despite a year of medical tests and painful procedures. Not satisfied with such a vague outcome, George and his family pushed for further tests and after another 12 months, George was told he had Multiple Sclerosis (MS). This diagnosis was later reviewed by other specialists and another year later, George was told that MS was an unlikely cause of his rapidly declining health - sadly, with no known cause, there was no known cure or prognosis. Devastated, George was back to square one; he had nothing more concrete than the knowledge that his serious illness was neurological, degenerative and progressive.

George also discovered that without a doctor's specific diagnosis for his illness, many disability service providers could not accept him as a client to provide him with adequate services to live at home. George's sister, Mila, resigned from her full-time job and became George's advocate. When the doctors told George there wasn't a cure for his medical condition, George and Mila went to the Philippines to explore alternative treatments.

George's family rallied and



Mila Cichello with brother George Abenoja.

continued to care for George at home, with some help from the Council's Home Care Services. At this stage, George was in a wheelchair and had difficulty swallowing, remembering details, hearing and speaking. He also needed to be driven to hospital for check up at least three times a week. As George's illness progressed, he fre-

quently collapsed and would be admitted to the Intensive Care Unit several times. The gap between what George's family could provide and his increasing care needs reached crisis point. Three years ago, George was admitted straight from hospital to a nursing home.

George describes his time in the nursing home as de-

pressing being continually confronted by death, and the end-of-life scenarios that plagued his thoughts. The fact that George attempted to act on these thoughts is indicative of the darkness that encompassed him. For sixteen long months, George barely existed in the nursing home.

George's family never gave

up hope for a better outcome for him. By virtue of Mila's strong advocacy, battling weekly with government departments, George was offered a place in a community shared supported accommodation. He has been in his new home for nearly two years now and the difference is remarkable. George's days are active and he has resurrected using his IT skills.

Today, with Mila's support, and the dedicated care of the house staff at George's home, George is focusing on reestablishing his health and social independence. George and Mila are aware of the cultural and social barriers around disability that must be overcome in their community and it is their shared vision to encourage greater acceptance. George and Mila have chosen to find a positive path in their challenging journey, driving change, looking forward and creating a better world for those who will follow. For George, the next goal is a trip back to the Philippines to visit his best friend.

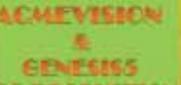
(Editor's note: The Summer Foundation Work and the Gellibrand Support Services (<http://www.gellibrand.org.au>) are organisations providing care and supported housing for George.)



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The Filipino Grand Chorus Choir of Melbourne with Cardinal Tagle and the choir's Director, Theresa Medina.

Photos by the Archdiocese of Melbourne, George Gregorio, Jess Marasigan, Richard Timbury / Casamento Photography / Kairos Catholic Journal.

Tagle promotes dignified life

PHILIPPINE Cardinal Luis Tagle reminded Filipinos in Australia not to forget one important virtue: dignity. Speaking in Filipino during a Fraternal Dinner in his honour, the charismatic Cardinal told those present: "My only request is that wherever you go, you remain to be Filipinos with dignity. Corruption, cheating, cruelty-- these are all works of people without dignity. Do not let yourselves to be like that."

The dinner, held last 7 August 2014 at St. Brigid's Parish Hall, was organised by the Filipino Chaplaincy of Melbourne in cooperation with the Philippine Consulate.

Referring to the diminishing value of dignity in the Philippines where power, pleasure and possession are taking a negative toll on poor Filipinos, the Cardinal said things will change only when every Filipino would endeavour to show goodness and contribute something in a dignified way. "We might not be able to leave riches, jewelry or properties to our children but we can leave a lasting legacy of a good name and a dignified future.

What is the use of having a famous name when it was not earned in a dignified manner?" he asked. Recently, the Cardinal has been vocal about his position on the pork barrel issue, making firm his stand that the money stolen from the poor must be returned.

Memorable Lectio Divina

On 5 August, Cardinal Tagle led a Lectio Divina (the ancient practice of slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures) and Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral attended by around 2,500 Filipinos. Filipino tenor, Michael Lapina and the 150-member Filipino Grand Chorus Choir of Melbourne, composed of seven Filipino choir groups in Victoria, impressed the parishioners with their powerful voices.

On becoming the next Pope

During the Fraternal Dinner, the Cardinal recalls the episode in his life when he was one of the strong contenders to become the next Pope. "I am very far from being a model of virtue. Look at my face," the humble Cardinal said. He shared that during that time, interna-

tional journalists joined the frenzied anticipation that he might be the next Pope. He said he despised all the media attention and publicity. The turning point, he said, was when he met a Filipina domestic helper; it changed his perspective. He said the girl approached him not for a photo opportunity but to tell him that no matter what happened she wanted to thank him because the TV appearances and photos only made her employer kinder and gentler to her. She said somehow, as a Filipino, her dignity was lifted. After saying this, the Cardinal stopped and was unable to hold back tears. "I realised. All along I thought the publicity was for me and about me. God communicated to me, 'No Chito, it's not about you, not for you. It is for your brothers and sisters.'" He ends, "I pray that every Filipino will try his or her best to be a dignified person for the good it will bring not only for you but for the many, many people."

Honorary degree conferred from ACU

On 4 August, the Australian Catholic University

in Melbourne conferred on Cardinal Tagle the highest honour as he was made an honorary Doctor of the University. His Eminence Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York was also conferred the same title. Cardinal Tagle also delivered a talk on "The Sacred Gift of Migrants and Refugees: An Asian Perspective".

Uniting Filipinos in Australia

The Cardinal's meetings with the Filipino Catholic communities in Sydney and Melbourne brought a positive effect in uniting Filipinos and bringing them together in one venue. In his talks, he even reminded the Melbourne leaders and parishioners to not only focus on the good things of life in Australia like constant parties and karaoke sessions. "You also need to learn catechism. Para hindi lang kain nang kain ng pansit. Para hindi lang tayo karaoke nang karaoke. If asked, sino si San Pablo, you don't answer, 'Ah gusto n'yo ng adobo, gusto n'yo ng pansit?'" he said smiling, sending roaring sounds of laughter from his audience in St Brigid's Hall.



Fr Litoy Asis and Consul General Gigi Kalong with Cardinal Tagle.



Volunteers and friends with Cardinal Tagle.



Mutya ng Australia bets shine in Philippine pageant

MUTYA ng Australia Kim Fyfe finished 2nd runner up in the recently-concluded Mutya ng Pilipinas 2014 beauty pageant held 08 August 2014 at Solaire Resort and Casino Manila. Fyfe was also included among the Top 10 Best in Evening Gown, and also won Special Award Mutya ng Biocera.

Mutya ng Melbourne Pauline Edralin, meanwhile, finished among the Top 10. Edralin was also named Miss Friendship during the pre-pageant competition.

Kim and Pauline were chosen to represent Australia in the Philippine pageant, after winning the title Mutya ng Pilipinas and first runner-up, respectively in the coronation night held 14 June 2014 at L'Amour Reception. The Mutya ng Pilipinas 2014 Melbourne working committee is composed of: Choy Symes, National Chairperson; Hector Calara, Press Coordinator; and Terry Kane,



Pauline Edralin wins Miss Friendship.

Haydee Crupi, Rose Crupi and Lehi Reyes, Pageant Coordinators.



Kim Fyfe wins 2nd runner-up in the Mutya ng Pilipinas pageant.

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Christmas in July with the elderly

THE AUSTRALIAN-Filipino Community Services (AFCS), led by Norminda Forteza, held a Christmas in July celebration last 16 July 2014 at Scent Thai Restaurant in Knox City. The Filipino seniors were also joined by few other nationalities who all enjoyed Christmas carols led by the Australian Multicultural Senior Support Group.

The event was a joint Planned Activity Group event of the Filipino seniors of Casey and Dandenong, Knox Seniors and Young Generation group. Greg Jabal, Senior Emigration Officer Commission on Filipinos Overseas,

talked about "Strengthening Ageing Filipinos in Diaspora".

Mrs. Krz Aguilar and musician Mr Salih led the group in the singing of Christmas

carols. Other volunteers, supporters and friends also graced the event.

A sumptuous Thai lunch was served.



Reg Jabal, Senior Emigration Officer of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.



Norminda Forteza, Home and Community Care Manager.



Photos by Meanne Gregorio

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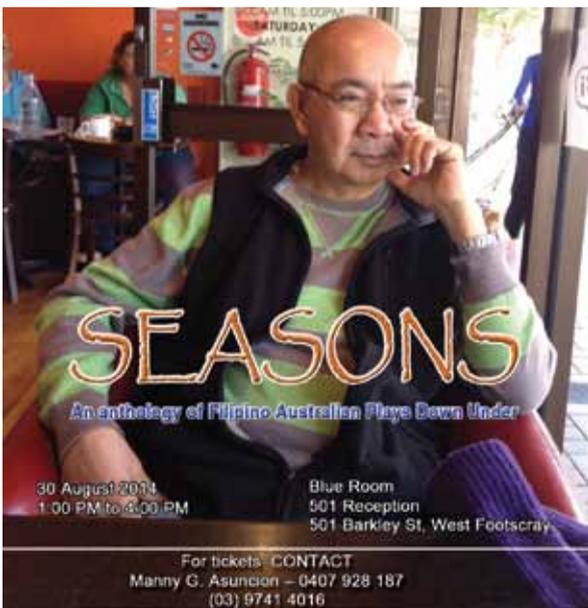
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Christmas in July for Damayan groups

WITH a day full of fun, presentation and good food topped by a tribute to Lydia John, a volunteer for 27 years, the Planned Activity Group's "Christmas in July" last 31 July was an unforgettable experience for the Filipino elderlies. Even the volunteers and staff of the Filipino Community Council of Victoria (FCCVI) and the Philippine-Australian Foundation (PAFI) had a blast seeing the smiles on the faces of the seniors. Around 150 flocked to the Lakeside Reception Centre in Taylors Lake to this FCCVI's annual event.

Various Damayan groups performed special numbers ranging from Hawaiian, Filipiniana dance to Pinaupong Tinikling. The latter gained the most applause as two groups of elderlies did tinikling by sitting down and using their canes to do the movements.

Lydia John: God-given caregiver

A special tribute was held for Lydia John for her 27 years of service as FCCVI volunteer. In his speech, Rolly Ferrer praised his colleague for always giving 100 percent in whatever she does especially for the elderlies. "To our Nanays and Tatays, she is their God-given caregiver outside their family. She is more than a

daughter to them. She is their soulmate, their adviser who fortunately owns a huge and broad shoulder on which our much beloved Nanays and Tatays could cry on," he said.

Meanwhile, Lydia is happy that the community appreciates her service for the past 35 years. "Community service is really my passion. I want to keep going. I am so blessed and I want to give it back to the community," she told *The Philippine Times*. She said even when she is no longer with the FCCVI, she is willing to help the elderlies when she is able.

On being a volunteer

Lydia joined FCCVI in 1987 as a volunteer helping to do its fundraising activities. In 1996, she was asked to help them in volunteering home-based support services which included visiting the elderlies in their homes, taking them on outings and assisting them in their shopping. Sometimes these seniors would sleep over at her place. She assisted the Planned Activity Group's day centre and Damayan for the elderlies and people with disabilities and their carers. In 2003, she was employed as a part-time Day Care Centre Assistant until she became a Planned Activity Group Coordinator in 2010.

Lydia said volunteering has surprising benefits. "It allows me to connect to our community and make it a better place. It strengthens my ties to the community and broadens my support network," she said, adding that volunteering has huge impact to the community.

Lydia said by helping others it kindles her own happiness. "It brings fun and fulfilment to my life especially helping our Nanays and Tatays of Damayan 1, 2, 3 and 4," she added, mentioning and thanking her team, Julie Bacso and Anthony Crisostomo for their support.



Lydia John with the Filipino seniors.



Lydia John (front; 9th from right) with Filipino seniors, FCCVI/PAFI officers and volunteers.



FCCVI inaugurates bigger home

THE FILIPINO Community Council of Victoria Inc. (FCCVI) and the Philippine-Australian Foundation (PAFI) held a Quarterly Meeting of the Management Committee and the inauguration and blessing of the Building Hall Extension of the Philippine-Australian Multipurpose Centre. The event was held last 27 July 2014.

Philippine Honorary Consul General Gigi Kalong led the ribbon cutting ceremony, while Fr. Alfred Yap blessed the extension. Kalong said to the officers and members, "We are not getting

any younger, let us involve young people. Like Christ, we have done what we have to do. Let us decrease and let the others increase." While acknowledging their participation and their love for the place and the community, Kalong reminded them, "Let us not think this is ours. We have to protect with love not power."

A special gift presentation was handed by John Gillespie to Perla Luetic, FCCVI Chairperson.

Tribute to Lydia John

Officers, volunteers and members offered special

tribute to Lydia John who resigned as Planned Activity Group Coordinator after 27 years of service. Words of thanks and appreciation were delivered by her peers and friends.

Lydia will now serve as Business Development Manager of Barkly International College based in Lonsdale Street. She is also connected with Community West, The group sang "That's What Friends Are For" to honour Lydia. Lydia promised to be available to the elderly when they need help. She is involved in the adult education program.



ConGen Gigi Kalong cuts the ceremonial ribbon.



Paying tribute to Lydia John.



Fr Alfred Yap blesses the new extension.



Perla Luetic, Norma Serrano, Lily Gillespie and Jing Sosa all came wearing yellow despite not agreeing on what colour to wear.



Posing for a souvenir photo.

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that you and your partner share financial commitments and responsibilities, including: joint ownership of real estate or other major assets (for example, cars, appliances) and any joint liabilities (for example, loans, insurance); sharing of finances; legal commitments that you and your partner have undertaken as a couple; joint bank accounts for a reasonable period of time; and sharing of household bills and expenses.

The nature of the household

You will also be asked to provide evidence that you and your partner share responsibilities within your household, including: your living arrangements; a statement outlining the basis on which responsibility for housework is distributed; joint ownership or joint rental of the residence in which you live; joint utilities accounts (electricity, gas, telephone); joint responsibility for bills for day-to-day living expenses; joint responsibility for children; or correspondence addressed to both you and your partner at the same address.

Social context of the relationship

How your relationship with your partner is seen by your friends and family will be considered including:

evidence that you and your partner are generally accepted as a couple socially (for example, joint invitations, going out together, friends and acquaintances in common); the assessment of your friends and acquaintances about the nature of your relationship; evidence that you and your partner have declared your relationship to government bodies, commercial/public institutions or authorities; statutory declarations made by you or your partner's parents, family members, relatives and other friends; joint membership of organisations or groups; and evidence of joint participation in sporting, cultural or social activities; or joint travel.

Here is a list of documents that you can present as evidence of your relationship:

- Mortgage documents, Contract of Sale/purchase,

Certificate of Title, receipts for major items purchased in joint names.

- Joint bank or credit card statements listing full details of transactions and current balances
- Utility accounts for rate notices, gas electricity, telephone/mobile, and internet connections.
- Current employment details and/or pay slips from your and your sponsor's employers
- Superannuation statements from your current or previous employment for you and for your sponsor; Family allowance payments
- Birth certificates for children of the relationship
- Wills and Insurance policies showing the names of the beneficiaries
- Insurance policies (home, contents, car or personal)
- Health care cards or pri-

vate health insurance documentation/correspondence

- Documentary evidence to support any declarations that you have made in the application form and statutory declarations
- Australian driver's license for you and your sponsor
- Car registration documents for you and your sponsor
- Photographs at various events or social functions
- Letters (including envelopes with legible post marks) received at your current or previous home address either in joint or separate names.

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Evidence of relationship

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You and your partner must each provide a statement regarding the history of your relationship, including: how, when and where you first met; how your relationship developed; when you decided to marry or commence a de facto partner relationship; your domestic arrangements – how you support each other financially, physically and emotionally and when this

level of commitment began; any periods of separation – when and why the separation occurred, for how long and how you maintained your relationship during the period of separation; and your future plans.

Evidence of your relationship

There are four broad categories of evidence that you need to provide: financial aspects; the nature of the household; social context of the relationship; and the nature of your commitment to each other.

Financial aspects

Evidence will be required

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Migrante holds 2014 Winter Tipanan

Reyvi Mariñas

MIGRANTE Melbourne held its Winter Tipanan on Saturday, 26 July 2014 at Koornang Uniting Church in Murrumbeena, Victoria.

Migrante's Tipanan is a bi-annual fundraising event to help maintain the Migrante Centre in the Philippines and to support distressed Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and their families.

The event was attended by more than 100 participants with the support of Migrante Melbourne's three chapter organisations: Migrante Melbourne West, Migrante Melbourne North and Migrante Melbourne East, and its sister organisations—Gabriela Australia and AnakBayan Melbourne.

Members of other Filipino organisations including the Filipino Community Council of Victoria Inc (FCCVI) and Melbourne Triskelion were also present and provided support to the event.

Dr Ali Khan, the Chairperson of Victoria Commu-



Chianne Kelly sings Katy Perry's 'Roar'.

Photos by Dexter Suganob



Drawing of the raffle tickets with Sheila Kotsakis (emcee), Liza Aquino Di Blasio (Western Union) and Charo Pompa (Migrante Melbourne Secretary-General).

nity Engagement Committee, gave a short message on community engagement and the importance of active involvement of Filipino groups in the community such as that of Migrante Melbourne.

The night continued with Original Pilipino Music (OPM) live band, trivia contest, dancing, raffles and an auction of a return ticket to the Philippines.

Migrante Melbourne will hold a Cultural Tipanan later this year to continue its advocacy and support to OFWs and their families in the Philippines, in Australia and around the world.



Migrante officers hand over the return ticket to Homer Bassig, the winner of the ticket auction.



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Search for the best adobo recipe on

THE CEBUANO Association of Australia will host the first Adobo festival on 6 September at Springvale LAC Centre. The festival aims to promote the Filipino signature dish, adobo. An authentic Filipino recipe, adobo is primarily meat of any type which is usually marinated in soy sauce, vinegar and garlic and can be cooked in many different ways. Adobo festival has become an annual event in the U.S. for nine years now, but it is going to be held in

Melbourne for the first time.

An adobo cooking contest will highlight the Adobo festival and is open to anyone who is excellent at cooking adobo. Esteemed chefs in Melbourne have been invited to act as judges for the competition.

“There are different variations on how adobo is cooked in the Philippines”, said Alex Sy, president of the Cebuano Association of Australia. “Our focus is to bring and highlight this to Filipinos and Australians

in Melbourne. It gives an opportunity for participants to showcase their style of home-cooked adobo.”

The event starts at 6 pm. Tickets will be sold at the venue for \$15. Participants for the adobo cooking contest are required to register on or before 31 August and have to pay a registration fee of \$25.

Enquiries about the Adobo festival and adobo cooking competition can be directed to ifo@cebuanoaustralia.com.au.

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Raquel has been in ministry since June 1981 & became a full-time pastor in 1987. She & her husband, Larry are Senior Pastors of Connect City Church Philippines. They have a beautiful daughter, Lara Danielle.



She is a composer, musician, conference speaker, worshipper, intercessor, WORD influencer, & history maker. She is truly a woman after God's own heart. God brought her to countries like UK, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Hawaii & other places in the Philippines bringing revival to churches.

Raquel operates in the gifts of prophecy, music, healing & deliverance. Her passion is to teach & equip women to be passionate for God & compassionate for the lost. Her goal is to disciple leaders for city & national transformation.

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Four cycles of life

Albert Sy

THIS month I have taken it upon myself to express my views on life's experience, the way it has worked for me and my family. Because for far too long, we have grown up with the old-fashioned mentality of our great grandfathers, where they worked for 52 years of their life and lived an average of 7-8 years in retirement as their philosophy was "we buy our home, pay it off over 20 odd years and then the government will keep us in our retirement". They relied on the government for all of their needs henceforth our welfare state of today's economy.

Refer to the picture and on the far left we have a timeline. This denotes our life from our birth until our death. In the first instance, from birth to 4 years old, we are taught and influenced by our parents, grandparents and family; from 4-6 years old we go to preschool or childcare and have another set of influences on our lives education. From 6 to 12 years of age, we go to primary school and are taught by another group of school teachers who influence us in accordance to their standards. Then we go to secondary schools and have another set of school teacher influences, this then continues at University for the next 5-8 years depending

on our vocational area of study, and again we come under another set of influences such as peer pressure from our fellow students, professors and lecturers.

Finally, we come to our working timeline where today we have 38-42 years of work and prepare ourselves for our retirement where with the advancement of medical research and better working condition, the average Australian lifespan has increased on average by 18-20 years in retirement. In comparison to our forefathers in the early 1900's who worked an average of 52 years and only enjoyed an average of seven years in retirement.

Why is this? Even in my time as a 15-16 year old in 1960, we used to go out and get a job whereas 90% of today's counterparts are going to universities until the mid-20s before they graduate and get into the workforce, and we now enjoy an extended lifespan well into our 80's. Accordingly from now on, we can no longer rely on the government pension to support us in our retirement and we need to provide for ourselves to lead a reasonable lifestyle in retirement, otherwise we will be a burden to our families.

Finally we get a job, and this comes under the livelihood cycle. Our job pays for our home occupation whether paying for our mortgage or it pays for our rental, and also for

our living expenses, our children's education and our lifestyle expenses. However, the average last generation Australian has not concerned itself with its retirement plan and when we come to retirement, we are again entirely relying on the government for support and are living on the poverty line as the government cannot pay for our lifestyle we had during our working years.

May I suggest we now look at our cycles and along with our livelihood cycle which pays for our lifestyle. Let us as soon as we possibly can after commencing work consider putting in place a savings plan which along with the purchase of our first home can initiate the long term investment cycle. In the first instance, we must start saving; this can be in the form of bank interest bearing deposits, do some salary sacrificing into your industry Superannuation Funds, and learn how to budget your money. Because the average Australian savings plans are like this: we get paid our wages and we spend, spend, spend and save what is left over. Do you know what is left over? A big fat "0"? The right way to save is to set a budget, have your wage paid directly into your bank account and put aside a minimum of 10% of your wage or more if you can afford it and live within your budget and your future will change for the better.

If you initiate this practice as your deposits grow, you can then initiate your investment strategies and the form of investments can include property, shares and fixed interest and as your industry Superannuation Funds grow, you can also establish your Self-managed Superannuation Fund (SMSF) and take control of your money and invest in Property/Shares or other form of investment of your choice.

If you do this, once you retire your "Livelihood Cycle" finishes, and will be replaced by your "Long Term Investment Cycle", this will take its place and you can then enjoy a lifestyle in retirement that you have enjoyed during your working years, without living on the poverty line as provided by the government pension. By the way, for the next



generation, they will not receive an adequate pension until they are at least 70 years of age for any person born after 1st January 1966.

Should you have any questions or would like to seek further assistance on property investment or first home buyer options, please feel free to call Albert Sy on 03 9813 8188, Mobile: 0409 952 994 Email: albert@mbic.com.au. Disclaimer can be viewed on www.mbic.com.au.



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Gary V: Defying the years

Kristhine Gestano

WHEN most of his contemporaries have bowed out of the limelight, he remains a force to be reckoned with. He has defined our version of world-class performance, setting the bar for Philippine entertainment. And no pretentious wannabes have successfully snatched the crown or the title "Mr Pure Energy" from him. He effectively stood the test of time, defying not only the parade of years but also his diabetes condition – proving that the Gary Valenciano today is still very much the Gary Valenciano of the 1980s.

What better way for Gary to reaffirm this than to find himself almost 4,000 miles from his territory, pleasantly basking in the crazy admiration of fans gathered at the National Theatre in St Kilda on the cold, damp night of 12 July. Crazy? Yes, it was happy crazy! Even from the box office, you could hear the crowd cheering and clamouring. The historic venue, which dates back to 1920, was packed with people high on adrenaline. The crowd was singing, dancing and wearing the most humongous smiles possible. And during the interspersed silence, everyone was beautifully smitten with the man's stories, antics and surprises. Even Liz Honey, who is the show's producer here in Melbourne, was on her toes all night – having the best time of her life.

In between numbers, Gary jokingly admitted that the only undeniable difference from his old self is the heavy breathing that follows every performance. Despite this, there was no stopping or slowing the 48-year-old singer. He performed like there was no tomorrow, owning every inch of the stage with his version of Michael Jackson's dance moves coupled with

some of the most outrageous swagger that helped skyrocket his career. His singing voice soared and filled the hall, leaving everyone mesmerised and impressed with that prowess that is only his.

The three-hour show was a journey to his 30-year career as he sang hits after hits that sealed not only his bankability but also dictated his fate as an artist. It was a showcase of his diverse talent as he also played the drums, cracked jokes and made convincing imitations of people. It was also a treat to quality entertainment that came complete with sounds, videos, lighting and impeccable timing. But what impressed me the most was Gary's talent as a storyteller. It brought a seamless transition to the show and greatly enriched the experience. Somewhere down the line, I felt that apart from being entertained, I was also being blessed by the experience.

As a UNICEF ambassador, Gary shared touching stories of his visit to Tacloban, taking the audience on a graphic tour on the aftermath of Yolanda which he summed up with a strong message on the unsinkable spirit of the Filipinos. He emphasized the importance of family and how we can become better parents to our children before his son, Paolo, joined him onstage. The eldest son of Gary and Angeli Pangilinan held his own against his Dad, bringing to life a wonderful medley of classics. So when Gary encouraged the crowd to "allow their children to spread their wings and fly and then soar beside them", he was not preaching but was keen on manifesting it. He also acknowledged his Puerto Rican roots by performing songs like Smooth and La Bamba. And when his repertoire segued to inspirational songs, he punctuated that set with "Shout for Joy" where he



had everyone pumping their right hands in the air and in perfect unison. In my mind, that moment transformed into something incredible and indescribable -- transcending time, faces and place.

There are shows that entertain but Gary's concert superbly entertains and more importantly, enriches the soul. Yes, Gary has successfully defied the years -- neither showing age nor hint of his star waning but the years have also made him a great performer and a better person. Only an artist with his experience can create an intimate relationship with his audience and only a person like Gary takes the opportunity to use that experience to impart life's valuable lessons through his songs and stories.

Before he said good night to his adoring crowd, Gary thoughtfully sang Babalik Ka Rin – a song that fittingly capped his concert and successfully reinstated everyone's pride as a Filipino. When the music, video and lights died down, fans braved the cold night bringing with them hope that it wasn't just Gary who left a lasting impression on them but that Melbourne's love also impressed upon the man an enduring memory that is enough to make him want to come back. Soon.



Gary V with the Melbourne crew and producers, Liz and Mike Honey.



BKODE Dance Crew



Pamela David and JKP

Photos by Ren Bayani/SB3
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Gary V and son Paolo Valenciano

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Confessions of an Insta-fan

Michael Kho Lim

MANY people braved the chilly winter night just to listen to Asia's Nightingale and Las Vegas' Siren of the Strip Lani Misalucha at the Kingston City Hall in Melbourne on 2 August. This was my first time to see her perform live; and in this age of Twitter and Instagram, I was instantly transformed into a fan the moment she came onstage and claimed it as "Queen of the Night."

The show's repertoire didn't have a theme but it met the audience's expectation of listening to Lani belt out some of her classic singles and covers that included pop, love and movie theme songs. She kept everybody warm when she serenaded the audience with her version of "One Hello," "Love Will Keep Us Together," and "Starting Over Again."

However, Lani was just warming up. She moved everyone with her touching rendition of "Saan Darating ang Umaga" especially when she shared how the music video was done à la social experiment, in which

she was disguised as a street singer, together with a blind couple, performing at the busy streets of Manila.

Lani's interpretation of "Love on Top" was also seamless. She described it as a song that seems to increase its notes endlessly. She wrapped up her first set with a very powerful performance of "My Heart Will Go On," and had some of the audience members standing.

Indeed, Lani went on (and on) as she opened her second set with the show-stopping classic aria "Nessun Dorma." And there was simply no stopping Lani. Wanting to satisfy the audience who cheered for more similar operatic music, she followed it up with the pseudo-operatic midsection of "Bohemian Rhapsody" to the crowd's delight.

As the show came to a close, Lani sang "Anak," which is included in her latest album "The Nightingale Returns," and capped the night with a heartfelt delivery of "Bukas na lang Kita Mamahalin." As expected, the audience asked for more, and Lani just gave everyone that encore



Pamela David



Sisters Charlene and Jehscy Sotelo.

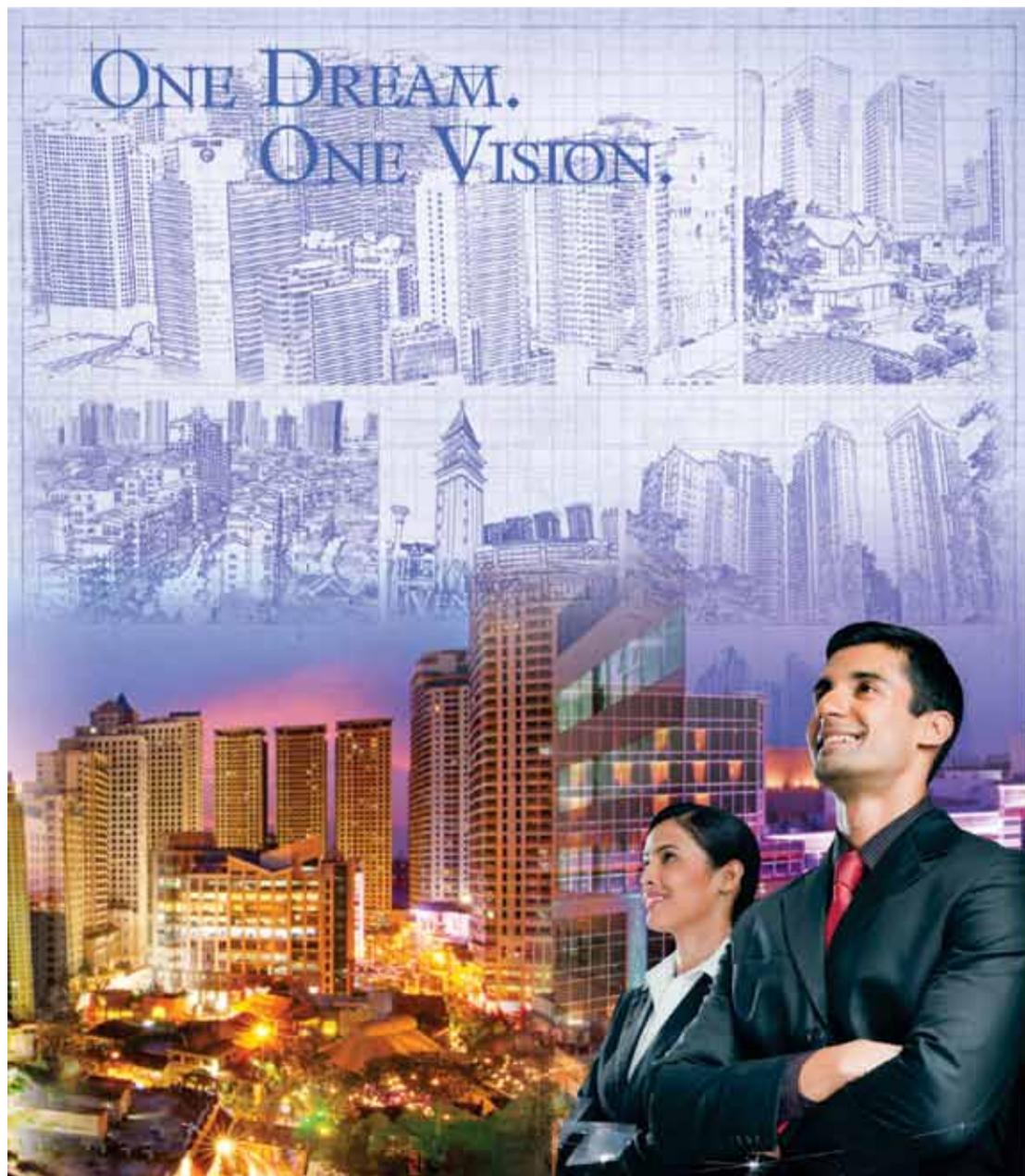


song—a cover of Katy Perry's "Roar," which led some



of Lani's fans to dance the night away.

(Editor's note: The concert was produced by Ed and Obeth Guevarra of EMG Sports and Entertainment Network.)



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The dreams we weave

Michael Kho Lim

WE all have dreams we want fulfilled. For musician and writer Ida Anita del Mundo, it is writing a Filipino epic story. This dream began to see fruition when she had the opportunity to visit Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, in July last year as a reporter for *The Philippine Starweek* magazine.

The place is inhabited by the T'bolis, an ethnic group renowned for their traditional *t'nalak* cloth, which is tediously handwoven from abaca fibers. Many patterns for the cloth are manifested in a weaver's dream, thus T'boli weavers are popularly dubbed "dream weavers."

The beauty of Lake Sebu inspired Ida. She found this to be the perfect setting for a story she has been developing, with the tradition of *t'nalak* weaving becoming the thread that tied the whole narrative together, and the T'boli culture, including its art and music, further enriching the story.

Then the Cinemalaya



L-R: Mara Lopez, Alex Medina, Nonie Buencamino, Bembol Roco (pls crop the man leftmost)

Philippine Independent Film Festival entered the picture. Del Mundo's dream script became bigger than she expected. It's coming to life on the big screen.

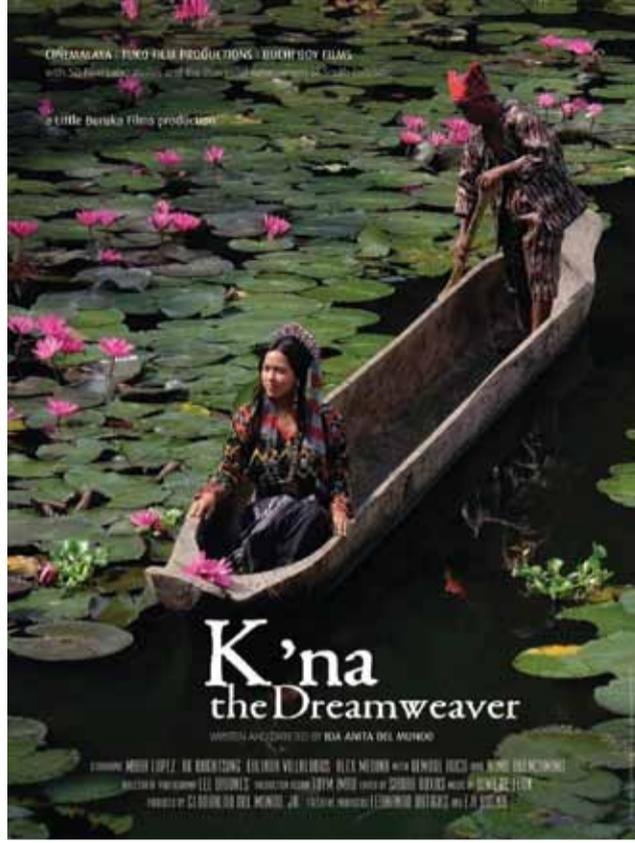
K'na, the Dreamweaver tells the story of K'na, a T'boli princess and the village's next dream weaver who is torn between following her heart and marrying someone for the sake of restoring peace in her com-

munity. *K'na* means "dream" in T'boli language.

In the process of doing the project and interacting with the T'bolis, Ida observes them to be very modern but their traditions are still very much alive, including their respect for abaca.

"The *t'nalak* is an integral part of the milestones in their lives—like birthing and marriage," Ida explains. "But what was most interest-

ing to me was even in their everyday life, you could sense the presence of their *t'nalak* tradition. When we were having problems on the set, the locals described the situation as 'tangled abaca threads.' Then we did a ritual at the lake in respect to Fu Dalu, the goddess of abaca, and everything worked out from then. The abaca threads were straightened out."



(Editor's note: *K'na, the Dreamweaver* is a finalist at the 10th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival running from 1 to 10 August at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and other Philippine cinemas. View the full article on <http://wp.me/p1toAj-7Qu>)

Inspirational book to be launched

AN INSPIRATIONAL book authored by Lorna Ramirez will be launched on 16 August 2014 at her residence in Avondale Heights. Titled *My Innermost Thoughts*, the book is a collection of the author's strongest beliefs and convictions, and offers encourage-

ment and enlightenment to young and old readers from all walks of life. It was published by Sid Harta.

Ramirez was born and raised in Manila. She has a degree in Chemical Engineering, and worked as a laboratory technician before migrating

to Australia in 1977. She has travelled extensively, gaining much from her interactions with people all over the world and building a strong foundation for her philosophies about life. She loves gardening, cooking, reading and playing the piano.



Lorna Ramirez (third from right), launches her first book amongst family and friends.

Kings of the dancefloor

BKODE Dance Crew won First Place during the recent Australian Dance Crew Championships Melbourne Prelims. Members include Marlon Sangalang, Melvin Gamboa, Ajay Rodriguez, Richard Baculo, Jonathan Samson, Lowell Demetita, Preston Cuschieri, Aaron Jules, Brian Limco, Christopher Oray, Carlo Castillo, Christopher Vicente, Gian Magdaluyo, Jay Mayor, Matthew Gozon, Karl Sanchez, Roberto Lazaro, Fenando Molina and EJ Tuazon.



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Jayden's first.

Jayden Misolas-Hean celebrated his first birthday last 31 May 2014 at the Christ Our Holy Redeemer Hall in East Oakleigh with parents, Panha and Jisela, other family members and friends who all enjoyed the night of games, photo booth, good food and lollies.



60 fruitful years.

Three things that make Francis Goh's 60th birthday celebration extra special: First is the presence of his friends and family members enjoying the live band and lovely food and laughter. Second is his wife, Melan singing for him, "I Can't Stop Loving You", and third is his daughter, Serene (seated, left) delivering a special message in front of people, thanking him: "You have brought me up to be hard working, to live my life with high morals and to be always thoughtful and kind to everyone I meet." These sum up how the man is well loved by the people around him.



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Double 8, double luck. Nanay Maria Catayas is kissed here by her loving husband, Tatay Mamerto as she blows her birthday candles in celebration of her 88th birthday. Photos below show Nanay Maria's grandchildren and daughters in Australia.



I am 70! Fearless in her declaration as she epitomises someone who defies age, Norma San Diego Santos recently celebrated her 70th birthday with family and friends at Lezette Restaurant.



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Melbourne teams finish 2nd in NASA Goodwill Games

NSW—The Melbourne Integrated Sports Club (MISCI) had a runner-up finish to Sydney Amigos to the tune of 57-59 in a finals game played at the 38th National Australian Sports Association (NASA) Global Filipinos Goodwill Games on 19 and 20 April 2014 in Sydney, NSW. The team was composed of Michael Ogdock, captain; Wayne Suzara, vice-captain; and LJ Chan, Jose Ternate, Owie Sarvida, Marvin Lugtu, Web-

ster Deleon and Justin Kulyk, team members. Raphael Sanding was also fielded to compete in the Men's Division 2 Golf Competition in the same tournament. He finished second.

The NASA tournament opened competitions in basketball, chess, golf and tennis for competitors from New South Wales, New Territory, South Australia and Victoria.

The MISCI officers and volunteers who helped in the

competition include Sammy Diego, NASA and MISCI Director; Sabino Riego, Secretary; Tamara Kulyk, Assistant Secretary; Susan Gabriel, Treasurer; Adel Gamat, Assistant Treasurer; Manoling Gamat, Sports Director; Fidel Oray, Hilda Oray, Eddie Lureta and Violy Laureta, Organisers; Dave Viovicencio, Edna Parolma, Alfie Fittis, Vicky Kulyk and Justin Kulyk, Volunteers.



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The Inner Game

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WHAT is number one killer of success? What is that key factor that is preventing you from achieving your goal? The answer is "Procrastination". This trait causes more failures and disappointments, more despair and constant disagreements with husbands and wives. This trait is ingrained within us from childhood. Do you remember saying to your parents "mamaya na po" after they have told you ten times to take the rubbish out or wash the dishes? We learned that from our parents and in turn we repeat what we model. I call this "Pressing the Snooze Button"— it's when the alarm goes off in the morning and you press the snooze

button to sneak in an extra 4 minutes and 59 seconds before you decide to press the snooze button again. By doing this, you run a high chance of running late, missing a flight, appointment, train or get stuck on the Monash Freeway.

After speaking to a few people within our community, many reminded me that the Spaniards taught this "Mañana Habit" to us (Manana means tomorrow or a specified future time). Didn't they leave 400 years ago? I think that many of us are just using that as an excuse and procrastinating in making a change. Having this trait for 400 years has not served you/the culture well at all. I may be mind

reading here but I believe that the deep root cause of the habit of procrastination is fear—fear in succeeding on the task, fear about achieving the goal and fear of getting out of your comfort zone. There is also a fear of 'if I did this task now and efficiently, they will expect it all the time'.

Tomorrow morning I challenge you to get up once the alarm clock beeps. You have to get up. An extra five minutes in bed will not make a difference except delay you for an extra five minutes. That list of things you need to do, act on it straight away, take ownership and pride in completing the tasks you wrote.

The reality is that the most successful people are the people who don't sit on their hands and wait for conditions to be perfect; they stand up and get going. They grind and grind until the objective has been met. They too have experienced wanting to press the snooze button and procrastinate. The difference is that they push through and act straight away. You can have all the ambition, potential and reasons WHY! But if you procrastinate and don't act on it, it will be all in vain. Until next time, STAY FOCUSED.

For comments or feedback, email thad@firmfocuspt.com.



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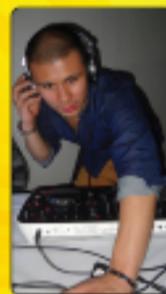
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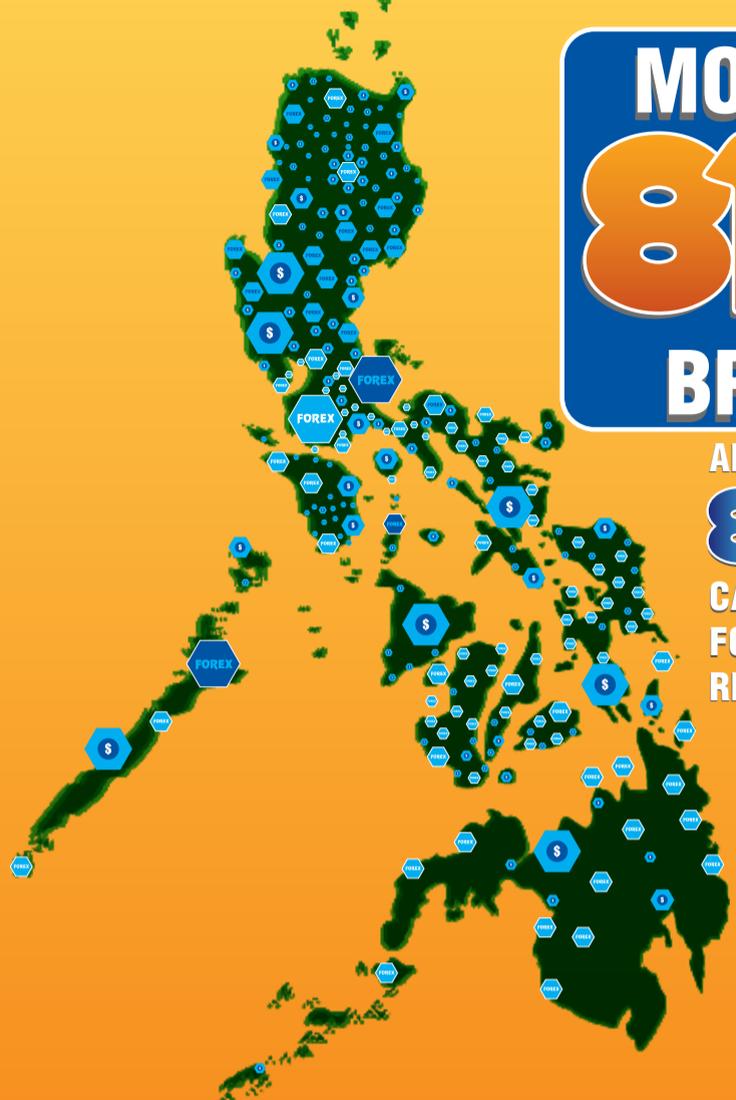
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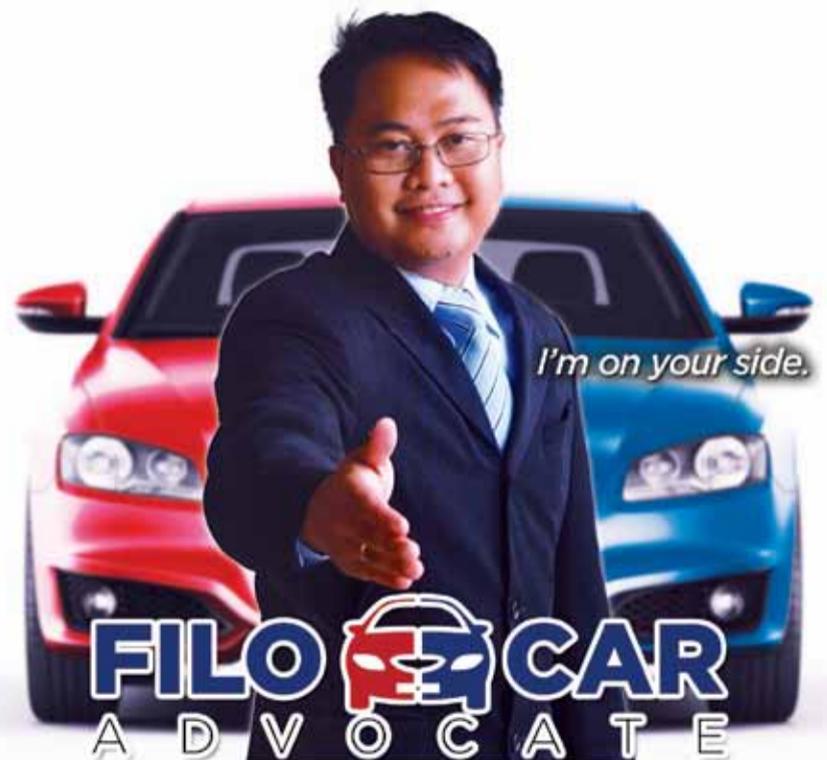


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