

The Voice of FilAmerica

Political empowerment is still a treasure that eludes us as a community here in America. While we are the second largest Asian American community in the United States, we have yet to harvest the power that comes from our numbers. The Voice of FilAmerica features elected and appointed officials – regardless of political affiliation – in the different US states who are of Filipino ancestry. As your Filipino American community newspaper, the Asian Journal recognizes the fact that we all have a responsibility towards bringing political empowerment to fruition, especially for our future generations. It is our hope to have our voices heard all over America.

Benito Miranda – A true community leader

by CYNTHIA DE CASTRO
AJPress

In most cities across America, Cultural Arts Commissions exist to honor citizens whose contributions to the arts and achievements are formally recognized; to expand the utilization of the Cultural Arts Center by both touring and local artists, and to broaden community awareness of the arts through work with PTAs and other citizen groups and organizations.

In the City of Torrance in Los Angeles County, the Vice Chairman of the Cultural Arts Commission is Benito Miranda, appointed as the City's first ever Filipino American Cultural Arts Commissioner. Appointed to the Commission in 2006, Miranda's term expires in 2010. It speaks volumes of Miranda to be appointed Vice Chair of the

Commission. He is tasked to continue honoring Torrance citizens who have made significant contributions to the arts. Certainly, your City honors you if it appointed you to honor its noteworthy citizens.

Benito Moras Miranda was born in Cebu City, Philippines, the son of a prominent family of Spanish/Chinese heritage. He moved to the United States in 1968 to attend school at Woodbury College in Los Angeles, majoring in Business Management with a minor in International Trade. By his junior year he became the school's first foreign student body president.

In his early years in California, Ben's love for his country made him seek out avenues that allowed him to be a part of the Filipino – American community. By 1969, he was one of the original members of the Filipino Basketball Youth Association.

After graduating from college, Ben became Operations officer for Security Pacific Bank in Burbank and later Assistant Cashier for City National Bank headquartered in Beverly Hills, CA. Soon after, Ben moved to Montana where he worked in Butte as HUD's Community Development Fiscal Officer and then moved to Billings to work for a couple of different financial and investment organizations such as New York Life and First Bank's Insurance Division.

After 10 years in Montana, Ben returned to Los Angeles. His diverse experiences in management, creative sales and marketing strategies have helped to expand markets and maximize sales resulting in substantial profits for the

companies he worked for.

Ben's love for the Filipino-American community is evidenced by his participation in civic and community events. As the Territory Manager, South Los Angeles County area for his company, PacifiCare's Secure Horizons Medicare Division, a division of United Health Care, Ben not only assists in promulgating Filipino-American causes, but also uses his influences in the corporate arena to gain access to corporate awareness for the Fil-Am groups he is currently a member of. Acknowledgement of his contributions came in the form of a Certificate of Appreciation from the Philippine Consul General of Los Angeles.

Benito Miranda has never been the type to just rest on his laurels; he has always wanted to give more of himself to noteworthy causes that will make his life more meaningful. A true community leader, Benito became president of the Board of Directors of SIPA (Search to Involve Pilipino Americans), where he previously served as one of its Board Members beginning in 2000. He was also Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors for FASGI (Filipino American Service Group). Ben continues to sit on the Board of Fil-Am Athletes International, NAARC, and the Federation of Fil-Am Associations of Long Beach. He has also been recently elected President of the Rotary Club of Historic Filipinotown.

Ben has made it one of his life's goals to do his part in enhancing the quality of life of Filipino Americans in LA and throughout Southern California. That's why he continues to passionately serve the FilAm community thru SIPA, the largest Filipino American non profit organization in the US. His passion is to make a better future for the next generation. He once gave an emotional speech in a SIPA event, fighting back tears as he summed up one of SIPA's core focus: "Do not forget our children. Nothing can replace the joy of seeing hope in the eyes of a young child."

This community leader has come a long way from his childhood days in Cebu. His greatest wish today? To celebrate his 60th birthday in his hometown a few months from now, on January 30, 2009, with his wife, artist Becca Godinez, and their two daughters, Natasha and Ann Marie. Certainly, it is a time of celebration and a time to honor this Cebuano – yet another Filipino who makes us Pinoys proud. ■

IMMIGRANT LIVING: 101 AND BEYOND



MONETTE ADEVA MAGLAYA

In a column written by Peggy Noonan in the Wall Street Journal

last week, this conservative woman who was a speechwriter for Ronald Reagan unloaded what is now becoming a pattern of women in media who cannot stomach the mounting success of other women, in this case, of Sarah Palin. Although, Noonan did say on television that in the first and only vice presidential debate between Palin and Biden, "she killed" from the first moment Palin, extended her hand to Biden and said, "Hi, nice to meet you. May I call you Joe?" From then on, Noonan, as though following a meme from the dishonest, disreputable alphabet mainstream media who are acting like rats following the Pied Piper, has joined others in discrediting this increasingly popular woman from Alaska who has energized a major sector of the population, this woman who many women identify with despite the horrific level of personal attacks mounted against her.

By the way, I can't help but be reminded of the ultimate fate of the rats with some glee but with sadness over the fate of the innocents of Hamelin. But I digress.

From Noonan's article, *Palin Failin'*, here's an excerpt.

"...But we have seen Mrs. Palin on the national stage for seven weeks now, and there is little sign that she has the tools, the equipment, the knowledge or the philosophical grounding one hopes for, and expects, in a holder of high office. She is a person of great ambition, but the question remains: What is the purpose of the ambition? She wants to rise, but what for? For seven weeks I've listened to her, trying to understand if she is Bushian or Reaganite – a spender, to speak briefly, whose political decisions seem untethered to a political philosophy, and whose foreign policy is shaped by a certain emotionalism, or a conservative whose principles are rooted in philosophy, and whose foreign policy leans more toward what might be called romantic realism, and that is speak truth, know America, be America, move diplomatically, respect public opinion, and move within an awareness and appreciation of reality.

But it's unclear whether she is Bushian or Reaganite. She doesn't think aloud. She just ...

Sarah's substance or Noonan's nuance? Take your pick

"There's a special place in hell for women who don't support other women."
– Madeleine Albright

says things....."

Greta van Susteren of Fox News, called Noonan out "... to give it a rest" and rightly so. In a blog, Greta took the cudgels for what I suspect would be the silent majority who would like to put these unheeded, self-satisfied, "sour-graping" women pundits in their rightful place – a) seated in a corner wearing dunce caps or b) in "a special place in hell." Take your pick.

One obvious thing going for Sarah Palin, after having 5 kids, is that she is still eye candy – with a supportive, confident hunk of a man by her side, to boot. Many career women, especially in Hollywood, simply cannot abide that. It's been said in many women's magazines that looking good is still the best revenge. GREEN GIANT-SIZED ENVY is THE reason these rabid women are foaming at the mouth. Still, given the extremely hostile environment, Sarah is morphing to a Lady Di persona, despite the media, in just a few weeks. People notice her hair, her glasses, the color of her clothes and photographers obsess about her shoes. Yes, even her red peep-toe shoes on a great pair of gams can launch a thousand AP images on the web. Take that, you green-eyed monsters! Forget Hollywood and its celebs. The toxin in the botox may have seeped to their nogginns making them unable to process facts and think outside the botox ... ooops, I meant the box.

The so-called media elite, the likes of Noonan, et al., can dwell on nuance all they like. I will take Sarah's substance any time.

Clear-thinking, ordinary people with no vested interest, know Palin's accomplishments are solid, verifiable, quantifiable and repeatable, as opposed to the Dem front runner whose past associations, actions and endorsements and financial support from America's enemies should give everyone serious cause for concern. Almost without exception, past performance and allegiance indicate future behavior.

And Greta is right to point out that it is infinitely much more of a challenge to run an entire state with natural resources that play a huge part in America's drive towards energy independence as opposed to merely pounding a keyboard as a lowly wordsmith masquerading as pundit and making a living criticizing others. Like moi, for instance.

What the vile punditocracy and this complicit media elite do not understand is that the American middle class has been looking for a champion who know, even without trying very hard or using focus groups, exactly where they are coming from. An Ivy League diploma is no guarantee of performance. Witness the current leadership. Many politicians and talking heads with law degrees from Harvard and Princeton cannot claim to have a fifth of this woman's accomplishments in so short a time. Millions of middle class and Walmart-shopping

women identify with her persona – a woman with the smarts, the heart, the drive, the energy, the courage, determination and conviction to express her belief and commitment in the culture of life and the greatness of America particularly during these troubled times. She is from outside the beltway of politics and to many of us who has seen and smelled the stench of corruption of slimy career politicians, she is such a breath of fresh Alaska air. If her opponents are smart, they would think twice before trying to diss, much less disrespect this huge voting block. They do so at their own peril.

The more the media attack her, the more men and women voters from the center, will stand by her. Keep the attacks coming. Anger and resentment will find expression at the polls on November 04 with a vengeance. Those who like Sarah and identify with her will be THE critical swing voters who form part of the silent majority.

The effect of the Palin Factor in this election is yet unknown but there are sharp, palpable indicators only the deluded can deny. People watch and read about her on the internet, bypassing print and broadcast, becoming wise to the proclivity of media to lie, spin, prevaricate, and pander to the liberal left. I have personally heard a few say they want to throw out their TV sets and boycott all advertisers that use these media. The size of Palin's crowds and the trouble they go through, many driving for hundreds of miles and waiting as much as 5 hours under oppressive heat just to see her deliver a 25 minute stump speech sans the dishonest fluff of celebrity enhancements such as free concerts and the draw of free beer and giveaways, ought to give the One, the Dems, the punditocracy and these disingenuous pollsters just 2 more nightmare-riddled nights and horror-filled weeks.

In one state, Sarah drew over 20,000 wildly enthusiastic people gathered just to listen to her stump speech. Meanwhile, in a book-signing event for Noonan's book, an eyewitness in the blogosphere claimed, perhaps two dozen people, give or take a few, would generously approximate it.

SARAH SUCCEEDIN'? Why YES, most definitely. She makes all her detractors afraid, very afraid. How else does one explain the rabid rants?

Nota Bene: My views are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of AJPI. I encourage you to read my book, "The Complete Success Guide for the Immigrant: Life: How to Survive, How to Thrive, How to be Fully Alive." If you have very little time to read, browse through "The Immigrant's Little Quote Book for Success." Your local public library might have these books available or you can request your librarian to purchase copies. These are also available at amazon.com or immigrantsuccess.com Past articles are on the internet at www.asianjournal.com To ask questions, send feedback and requests, e-mail monnettemaglaya@sbcglobal.net or monette.maglaya@asianjournalinc.com

Western Union, Gawad Kalinga welcome new homeowners to Naic housing community



NAIC, Cavite, 10 September 2008 – The Western Union Company (NYSE: WU) today turned over the first 10 homes to selected families in Brgy. Bucana Sasahan, Naic, Cavite. The ceremony, led by Western Union executive vice president for Asia Pacific Ian Marsh, completed the first phase of the company's housing project in collaboration with non governmental organization Gawad Kalinga.

The 10 selected families were also given a "moving-in kit" which included a roll-up bed, basic home tools and furnishings such as a coal stove for cooking and heating (given the lack of electricity supply in the area).

Cavite currently accounts for the highest number of organized overseas Filipino worker (OFW) families among the Philippine provinces. The province has 6,021 OFW family organizations. Nationwide, there are now more than 154,000 organized OFW families. According to the National Statistics Office (NSO), there are nearly one million households in the Philippines with at least one family member working abroad.

"Western Union recognizes the contributions made by the OFW communities in Cavite. By



working abroad, they are able to provide not only financial support to their families but also to their respective barangays," said Marsh. "We at Western Union are optimistic that these homes we have built with Gawad Kalinga will serve as the first step towards realizing the dreams of the families of Brgy. Bucana Sasahan," he added.

Western Union offices in Israel and 16 European countries started working with Gawad Kalinga last year to build a total of 30 houses in Cavite, a small fishing village where most residents have loved ones working overseas. Gawad Kalinga hopes to reduce poverty in the country by providing land,

homes and food to Filipinos living below the poverty line to effect positive social transformation in the country. Its projects are supported by over 100,000 volunteers ranging from private individuals to corporations, while Gawad Kalinga beneficiaries also help with construction.

To date, Gawad Kalinga has built more than 1,700 villages and aims to complete a further 300 villages by end of this year.

The housing project in Brgy. Bucana Sasahan is part of Western Union's Our World, Our Family program which helps families stay connected, overcome barriers and achieve their dreams.

(Advertising Supplement)

THE FILIPINO SURVIVAL KIT



LIZA LEGASPI

A CAREGIVER'S task is hard. They take care of the elderly or the disabled 24 hours a day, 6-days a week. From preparing meals to organizing daily meds, their week is busy all the time. Like everyone else, they get depressed too. Hence, this weeks' issue is about how we can help them tackle their depression. So here goes:

Remember to smile or laugh. Find funny things during the day to help you get through it.

Don't think about sad things or family problems everyday. Unless you have a solution, don't think about it.

Stop talking about sad stories to your friends. You do not need

For caregivers: Overcoming depression

someone to pity you or the hard times you are going through.

Take your day off. Go on a short vacation. Getting away helps.

Give yourself time to smell the roses or appreciate the sunset. The world is great! There is no other place to go but up. So do not worry.

Do not be too serious about life. Find ways to make things a little lighter. Read books or find a hobby that is easy and fun.

Listen to music. Acknowledge your senses and find ways to enrich them.

Keep true friends that are honest and supportive. Note: being supportive does not mean that he/she will agree with you all the time. A friend is someone who will tell you things you do not like to hear too. He/she will tell you things that you need to know in order to make improvements about yourself.

"Desiderata" is a poem that might help you get through hard times., that is if you forgot or have not heard of it. Search for it online. It is a great food for the soul.

Accept the things you can't change and change the things you can. Don't feel trapped. Never feel trapped. There's always a

way out of any difficult situation.

Lastly, remember to pray. He listens. Have a great conversation with God. He speaks to us in a lot of different ways.

I hope the above list could help and please always remember to keep smiling. Life is good. Also, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have written to me and read my column for information. Two weeks from now, my column will be published monthly. Hence, this will allow me more time to go through your article or request and be able to write about it. Next week's article is about taking care of your senior relatives. For those interested on a topic, please email me at lizlegaspi@yahoo.com. I'll be waiting.

Liza Legaspi is an experienced marketer both in the Philippines and the US. She has been focusing on diversity groups for over 20 years. Liza is currently employed by a well-known Asian advertising agency. She has a wide range of experience in marketing consumer products and services.

Disclaimer: The items listed are mere suggestions and no guarantees that it will work for you. The tips provided worked for me and I am not making any promises nor will I be liable for any outcome.