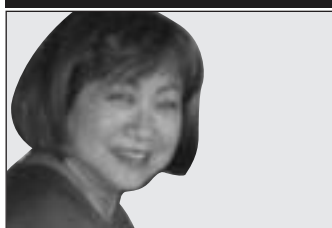


Money and the simple life

*"I owe, I owe.
So off to work I go."*

*— Car bumper sticker, taken from
the song of Snow White's seven dwarfs,
"Hi-ho, hi-ho. It's off to work I go."*

**IMMIGRANT LIVING:
101 AND BEYOND**



MONETTE ADEVA MAGLAYA

(Here's an old favorite excerpted from the book, "The Complete Success Guide for the Immigrant Life.")

THERE are no shortcuts in arriving at a decision to live a simple life. Sometimes, one has to go through a personal hell experiencing an inner fatigue and helplessness over the never-ending chase for the almighty dollar and quality of life in order to come to a conclusion that there has to be a better way than what is commonly believed.

Money is a major consideration in deciding to simplify one's life. Let's face it. Our attitude and relationship towards money have a lot to do with it. If you are always strapped for money because you are too deeply buried in debt, then money has you in a stranglehold. You have to work longer, harder hours in order to pay off the debt. Think of it this way. If you buy a new car which you have to pay on installment for the

next five years, you have just signed yourself on to work for the next five years to pay it off. If you love your work and can see yourself doing it for the same company for the next five years, then driving a new car and being able to pay for it are bonuses of the work that you love to do. But if you hate your job, "... aye there's the rub..." as Shakespeare would say. Overwhelming financial problems will prevent you from living simply.

Many who have taken the simple life path will tell you that being relatively debt-free can be very liberating. It will allow you to breathe freely and lead you to appreciate everything with a twinkle in your eyes, about life under these big blue skies.

Saved money can give you options to take an extended leave, extended sabbaticals, switch gears to study for a

change in career or simply to do the things you have always wanted to do but could not because you have been slaving your life away over things you have bought stashed in the garage, in the closet or in the basement unopened or things you have been maintaining to impress others with how successful you are and create an image.

To be able to save money, you will have to live below your means and pare down to the barest minimum your expenses to cover the basic necessities. Your treacherous, fat ego—the one that keeps wanting to impress others with bogus symbols of power and success—must be cut down to size. If you have neither the motivation nor the discipline to do this, it won't happen.

Ergo, put that big, fat ego on a diet, pronto.

If you begin to understand your attitude about money and how you can make it work for you instead of you spending your life away chasing it and living paycheck to paycheck, then you are on the right track. When it finally hits you that money can either free you or make a slave out of you depending on how you view it and how you use it, you can then begin to exercise the control you never knew you had over it. The reward is tremendous. You begin to experience a rare sense of freedom that only a simple life gives.

Charles Dickens who would probably make a good accountant as well, stated it plainly.

"Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery."

Nota Bene: To ask questions, send feedback and requests as well as to inquire about advertising in any or all of the 6 print editions of Asian Journal in California, Nevada and New York/New Jersey and/or advertising in the Print Edition Online of Asian Journal, e-mail monette.maglaya@asianjournalinc.com THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE SENT FEEDBACK.

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.

Dennis Apuan Colorado State Legislator

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
AJPress



HE went from sweeping floors to becoming a member of the Colorado State House of Representatives.

Fil-Am Dennis Apuan is serving his first term as a member of the Colorado State House of Representative. He serves House District 17, which includes southwestern Colorado Springs and the Fort Carson military base. The 44-year-old Apuan narrowly won his seat by a margin of less than 600 votes last year. He won just over 51 percent of ballots cast in the race. His victory was the only Republican-held House seat won by Democrats in 2008.

Apuan was born in the Philippines and arrived to the US at the age of 20.

At the age of 33, he moved from Los Angeles to Colorado Springs.

He began his life in Colorado as a janitor sweeping floors at the Broadmoor Community Church. However, he moved up and became the church's business administrator.

Throughout that time, he was a relentless advocate and non-profit leader. He worked as a community organizer and a regional director for the Colorado Progressive Coalition and for four years, served as vice chairman of the El Paso County Democratic Party.

He's also been a member of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Diversity Strategic Planning Team, a program director and chairman of the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission, and of First Congregational Church in Colorado Springs.

Apuan also was never afraid of fighting for what he believed in.

In 2003, Apuan along with a few other activists were arrested for protesting nuclear weapons at Peterson Air Force Base. He's also participated in a number of other non-violent protests against the war in the Middle East.

He began his political career in 2008. When a state house

seat was being vacated by Stella Garza-Hicks, a retiring Republican representative, Apuan decided to run for her seat.

He took a short leave of absence at the Colorado Progressive Coalition to make a run at the House.

He had no opposition in the Democratic primary. However, he faced Republican Catherine "Kit" Roupe, who had been favored to win the race, for the vacant seat in the 2008 general election.

Roupe tried to characterize Apuan as an anti-war and anti-military protester but Apuan said those were false claims.

Apuan won by a narrow margin of 600 votes.

Since being sworn in January 2009, Apuan has been kept busy. He is serving in the House Judiciary and Finance Committees.

Apuan has vowed to lower health-care costs; fostering jobs in clean energy and reduce business tax cuts as his priority while in office.

His vote against House Bill 1317 in Colorado has already made an impression on some of Colorado residents.

"I am writing in to thank my state representative, Dennis Apuan, for supporting the troops at Fort Carson by voting against House Bill 1317," wrote Calvin Morris of Colorado Springs in the Colorado Springs The Gazette newspaper. "That bill would prohibit the sale of public lands for the expansion of the Pifion Canyon Maneuver Site. The Army uses that area for important military training exercises before sending troops into battle. The bill is bad for our troops, and I'm glad our representative understands why. As a veteran, I can speak to just how essential it is to get the proper training before going into war... I applaud Apuan for breaking with his Democratic caucus to support the troops at Fort Carson, and am thrilled that we have a strong representative willing to stand up for his district." ■

ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS

You can Bring Down Your Loan Amount to Your Home's Current Value

IF you are upside down by \$100,000 or more
IF you purchased in the last 4 years or refinanced in the last 3 years
IF you have a "problematic loan":

- 1 yr/2 yr ARM or Option ARM loan • Interest Only loan
- Non-Amortizing/Negative Amortization loan
- No Doc or Low Doc Loan • Stated Income Loan

You may be a victim of abusive lending by the mortgage industry
You have legal rights to a WRITE DOWN of your mortgage to your home's current value

SAVE YOUR HOME!
SAVE YOUR MONEY!
SAVE YOUR CREDIT!

Not "Attorney-assisted".
Not "Attorney-backed".
Licensed ATTORNEYS fight for your rights against predatory lending.

Total Legal Services for Foreclosure Prevention



In Foreclosure? Not Behind?
Severely Delinquent? Job Loss or Pay Cut? Investment Property? Residential Property? Struggling to Pay Monthly House Payment? CALL NOW!

THIS IS NOT A LOAN MODIFICATION

You must be upside down by 100,000 to qualify. And you do not need to be behind in your payments!

LEGAL Home HELP
LEGAL NETWORK
Protecting Your Legal Rights with Compassion and Action

Legal Home Helpline for Filipino Homeowners **888.233.5485**

www.legalhomehelp.com

Reasonable Fees And Payment Plans Available

Will Obama's loan modification plan work?

MINDING YOUR FINANCES



ATTY. RAYMOND BULAO

LOAN Modification seems to be the new buzzword in today's mortgage marketplace. Wherever you go, this seems to be what everyone is talking about. You hear about it everywhere- in the newspapers, on TV, and loan modification help ads are all over the internet. Is this in fact the answer to the current mortgage crisis?

As our economy takes a turn for the worse, more and more people are at risk of losing their home. Lenders and servicers continue to be overwhelmed as they are inundated with loan modification requests from distressed homeowners who are desperately trying to stay in their home. A lot of people question whether the lenders are trying hard enough to solve the problem.

A loan modification can help a homeowner avoid foreclosure on a home that cannot otherwise get refinanced due to the homeowner's less than perfect credit, the loss of value of the home, or both. It is nothing more than a permanent change in the terms of the original loan so that the end result is a payment that the borrower can afford. If payments are delinquent (and in a majority of cases, they are), the back payments are put at the back end of the loan and thereby the loan is

fully reinstated. A loan modification not only benefits the homeowner; it also benefits the lender because it reduces lost revenues. Believe it or not, a lender is more interested in receiving mortgage payments from you every month than resorting to foreclosure unless that is the only recourse the lender has.

Recently, the Obama administration has passed legislation encouraging lenders to voluntarily work out loan modifications with homeowners who are struggling with their mortgage payments. \$75 billion has been allocated for this purpose and the administration believes that the reworking of troubled loans is a step in the right direction to rebuild the economy. The plan aims to help borrowers in serious financial hardship stay in their homes as long as they can make their monthly payments. Participating lenders are required to reduce monthly payments to no more than 38% of the borrower's gross monthly income. If that is not enough, the government would then step in to help reduce the payments down further, to no more than 31% of the borrower's gross monthly income. The interest rate can be reduced to as low as 2% and in some cases, the loan term can be extended to 40 years. Under this plan, keep in mind that the lender is not required to reduce the principal although it may be possible if the lender is willing. Lastly, income must be verified and documented as well as occupancy status. Only owner-occupied, primary residences with principal balances of up to \$729,750 are eligible and the loan must have originated on or before January 1, 2009.

It is not clear under the plan

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