



FIL-AM BULLETIN

The Official Newsletter of the
Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC
(A Non-Profit Organization to Promote Inter-Cultural Education and Understanding)

"Together
We Make A
Difference"

www.FilAmSC.org

★ Volume 17, Number 2

★ P.O. Box 24112, Columbia, SC 29224

★ Spring 2008

Fil-Am Spring Picnic, Easter Egg Hunt on March 23 at Sesqui Park

The Columbia Fil-Am annual spring picnic and Easter egg-hunt will be held again at the Sesquicentennial State Park on Easter Sunday, March 23, 2008, starting at 1:00 p.m.

The annual get-together is a great time to meet new and old Fil-Am members and acquaintances in one of Columbia's most beautiful state parks [9564 Two Notch Road, Columbia, SC 29223; (803) 788-2706]. For map and specific directions, visit FAAGC's website: www.FilAmSC.org. [Note: The park charges an entrance fee of \$2 per adult and \$1.25 per SC senior; children aged 15 and under are free].

This is a POTLUCK picnic so please bring a 2-liter soda and a covered dish enough for your family and friends. There will be a barbecue grill set up to cook hotdog, hamburger and other items. For variety, suggested dishes are as follows, based on starting letters of the family names (of course, in addition, you can also bring your own specialty dishes):

- A - Be :** Pork or beef dish
- Bi - D :** Noodles (*pancit, palabok*, etc.)
- E - I :** Chicken or fish dish
- J - O :** Vegetable dish or salad
- P - S :** Dessert (cakes, cookies, fruits, etc)
- T - Z :** Cooked rice, bread
- FAAGC:** Ice, plates, utensils, hotdog, hamburger, condiments

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Columbia Fil-Am Donate \$1600 to Philippine Child Welfare Groups

by Leah Cuaresma

[Editor's Note: During the Christmas break, FAAGC treasurer Myrna Whitmire and Executive Board member Leah Cuaresma (with her husband Manny Cuaresma) visited the Philippines and brought donations to the Philippine orphanages and child welfare institutions for which FAAGC raised money during the last annual gala. FAAGC made donations to the Hospicio de San Jose (\$400), the Asilo de San Vicente de Paul orphanage (\$400) and the ERDA Foundation (\$400). A \$400 check was also mailed to the SOS Children's Village in Tacloban, Leyte. The following is Leah's brief report on their visits.]

2007 was another remarkable year for the FAAGC. Because of the donations from the annual gala in September, the Association was able to generate enough funds allowing us to donate \$400 each to the Hospicio de San Jose, the Asilo de San Vicente de Paul, the ERDA (Educational Research and Development Assistance) Foundation (all in Manila),

and the SOS Children's Village in Tacloban City, Leyte. Thanks to our benefactors, donors and friends who made our fundraising effort a success. What made the past year even more remarkable for me, as a member of the FAAGC Executive Board, was the chance to visit and personally deliver the funds to the organizations in the Metro Manila area.

Fil-Am Exhibit To Feature Philippine "Palengke" at Columbia International Festival

FAAGC will participate again in the annual *Columbia International Festival* to be held at the Cantey Building of the SC State Fairgrounds on April 5-6, 2008. The festival, now on its 13th year when "the world comes to Columbia," showcases "the music, culture, food, and performing arts of the various cultures, nationalities, races, and language groups represented in South Carolina."

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Last December, I, together with my husband Manny and sister Myrna Whitmire, who is the current treasurer of the FAAGC, traveled to the Philippines for the holidays. On December 19, we drove down from the province of La Union to Manila to attend our nephew's wedding. Knowing our very hectic family schedule ahead, we decided to fulfill our FAAGC mission upon arrival in Manila.

Our first stop was at the ERDA Foundation at Sta. Mesa Heights and we came to know that this was only its administrative office as the foundation have on-site

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▲ An administrator of Asilo de San Vicente de Paul orphanage receives FAAGC's donation check from FAAGC treasurer Myrna Whitmire.



▲ FAAGC officers Leah Cuaresma (left) and Myrna Whitmire (right) pose with the assistant director and some staffers and children of the Hospicio de San Jose during their visit to deliver FAAGC's donation to the hospice.

Photos courtesy of Manny Cuaresma



The President's Corner by Alan Geoghegan

JOIN US AT OUR UPCOMING 2008 EVENTS

Welcome and greetings. I trust you all had a pleasant and rewarding Christmas break. We are gearing up for a number of spring activities and I hope that you can be a

part of them.

Our annual *Easter Picnic* will be held at Sesquicentennial State Park on **March 23rd** and we look forward to seeing many of you there. Soon afterwards, FAAGC will be participating in the *Columbia International Festival* on Saturday and Sunday, **April 5 and 6**. Come and enjoy some Filipino food, as well as to explore our country exhibit which will educate the public about Philippine culture. Volunteers are appreciated at this event, so please let us know if you'd like to help out.

Over the holidays, two of our board members hand-delivered donations to the children's institutions we raised money for at our last gala. We are sure these funds will help many children in need.

Please keep in touch with us. Our semi-active cultural dance troupe is often asked to perform in our area; you and/or your child or children may wish to perform. Without volunteers, we honestly wouldn't exist in the way we do now. Let any of our officers know and call us if you feel you have something to offer to FAAGC.

I am very much looking forward to seeing many of you at our events throughout this year.

Maraming Salamat Po!

Spring Picnic

(continued from Page 1)

Planned activities include an Easter egg-hunt and children's games with prizes.

FAAGC members and others in the Fil-Am community are all invited to come and share the fun, food and fellowship with family and friends. Those who wish to spend more time at the park can come earlier; the reserved park shed (*Shed 2 next to the baseball field*) is available from 10:00 a.m. on. Picnic goers are also urged to bring their portable chairs.

For further information and directions, check the FAAGC website (www.FilAmSC.org) or contact **Alan Geoghegan** (787-5255) or the other officers listed on this page. Sumter area Fil-Ams can contact **Cecilia Jacobsen** (773-6555). ❖

Summer Picnic

FAAGC is also making preliminary arrangements for a summer picnic, possibly to be held at Ft. Jackson's Weston Lake Recreation Area. A date has not been set yet.

International Festival *(continued from Page 1)*

The Association's country exhibit has the theme of Philippine "*palengke*" or open market. The display will also have other Filipiniana wares, books, videos and cultural items.

Cecille Jacobsen of the *Fil-Am Store* in Sumter has expressed an interest in preparing an array of traditional Philippine food (*lumpia, adobo, pansit*).

Festival exhibit set-up will begin on Thursday afternoon, April 3. FAAGC members and supporters are enjoined to help set up and serve as volunteers for food serving and manning the cultural booth during the festival. Pre-listed volunteers are free to enter; all pay parking.

Some Fil-Ams will also take part in the *Parade of Nations* and the *International Fashion Shows*. As before, the Philippines will be represented in the *International Bazaar* by a booth also run by **Cecilia Jacobsen** (owner of the *Fil-Am Store* in Sumter), selling Philippine delicacies, gift items, and other products.

International Festival

The family-oriented festival is one of the largest indoor cultural and international events in southeastern U.S. The *Columbia International Gala*,

when awards are presented to the 2008 *International Professional, Volunteer, Business Person, and Community Ambassador* recipients, will be held on Thursday, March 27, at the First Baptist Church (1306 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29201).

Global Education Day, the festival's opening event on Friday, April 4, brings students from all over the state for a day of fun and learning about cultural diversity and the contributions made by foreign-born residents.

Organized by the International Friendship Ministries, the festival is open to the general public on Saturday (10 am — 7 pm) and Sunday (noon — 6 pm). Admission tickets are \$5 for adults and \$1 for ages 6-12; children under 5 are free. Parking is \$2 per vehicle.

As they have done for several years now, past FAAGC president **Grace Collins** and FAAGC member **Imelda Go** continue to be regular members of the festival coordinating committee and the *Global Education Day* committee, respectively.

For updated schedules and details, call (803) 799-3452 or check the festival's website: www.cifonline.org. ❖

How To Reach Us

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P.O. Box 24112
Columbia, SC 29224

The **FIL-AM BULLETIN** is one vehicle of the Association to achieve its objectives and maintain regular communications with its members and interested parties. Contributions of articles (*as well as financial donations*) are most welcome; contact the Editor for more details.

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**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

★ **GRACE BALANQUIT** of Columbia, SC. A native of Cebu, she is a realtor with ERA Wilder Realty.

★ **TEODORA (Doring) BUHAWE** of Newberry, SC. Newly arrived from the Philippines, she is the mother of FAAGC member Tessie Spotts of Newberry, SC.

★ **RONELIN ZEARFOSS** of Columbia, SC. Newly arrived from Ramon Magsaysay, Zamboanga del Sur, she is married to FAAGC member Ken Zearfoss. ❖

CONDOLENCES

✠ *Our condolences to the families of:*

➤ **Dr. Hector Baens**, who passed away on December 8, 2007 in Columbia, SC. He was 76.

He was a cardio-vascular surgeon who, among other positions, served as a University of the Philippines professor from 1960 to 1981 and retired from the U.S. Army with the rank Lt. Colonel in the mid-1990s.

Dr. Baens and his family were longtime FAAGC members and supporters. One of his sons, **Patrick**, was a past FAAGC Executive Board member.

➤ **Paul Jeffrey Dizon**, who died on February 19, 2008. He was 41. He was a son of former longtime FAAGC member **Dr. Rosita Dizon**.

➤ **Marvin Daniel Noble**, who died in early February 2008. He was 77. He was the father of sustaining charter member **Marvin Noble, Jr.**

➤ any other FAAGC members and supporters who recently have lost loved ones but for which we had no details as of press time.

[FAAGC requests members with a death in the family to contact Spiritual Affair Committee chair **Tessie Kenerson** (699-1178), or any other officer, ASAP so proper arrangements, if needed, can be made by the Association.] ❖

New Assistant Secretary to be Elected

A new **FAAGC Assistant Secretary** will be elected during the upcoming spring picnic to replace Al Taylor who resigned recently due to his hectic out-of-state work schedule.

As specified in the Association By-laws, the Assistant Secretary keeps minutes of all general membership meetings and notifies and/or sends out meeting notices to members of the Association. The Assistant Secretary keeps an accurate roster of all members and a list of all standing and special projects committees.

A candidate for any elective position must be a paid member for at least 3 months prior to election, and must be present during the election **OR** if he/she cannot be present, must inform the ELCOM of his/her intention to serve if elected. This ensures that only those willing to accept nomination and election can be voted for. ❖

By-Laws Amendments

Possible amendments to the Association By-Laws are being sought from members to make the FAAGC more responsive and attuned to current conditions.

The current By-Laws specifies that "amendments ... may be proposed by the By-laws Committee, the Executive Board, or ... by any member ..."

For details, contact **Noel Alon (738-0372; FilAmSC@yahoo.com)**. Copies of the By-Laws can be downloaded from the FAAGC website: <http://www.filamsc.org> ❖

Orphanage Donations (continued from Page 1)

projects located in various places like Tondo and San Juan, Metro Manila. The foundation's very cordial and pleasant secretary gave us a brief overview of what ERDA does and explained to us their on-going projects.

ERDA Foundation

ERDA was founded in 1974 by Fr. Pierre Tritz, a French Jesuit priest who has been in the Philippines since 1952 as a school administrator and a teacher. His concern for Filipino out-of school youths drove him to start ERDA and ultimately give up his teaching career to concentrate on saving and helping these poor children.

Fr. Tritz believes that "the poor people are now in their present predicament not because they are lazy but because they lack opportunities and are limited or have no access at all to various resources." In his pursuit of funds, he traveled to Europe; but due to an accident, he now tirelessly reaches out to benefactors by writing letters.

ERDA started with only six children; during the 2006-2007 school year, however, it helped 33,619 children, including 6,325 pre-schoolers, 21,958 elementary, 5,300 high school, and 36 college students.

At present, ERDA also provides loan assistance to family beneficiaries for starting up

small businesses, and has various projects that reach out to street children and child laborers. These projects aim at the worthwhile education of these children to give them the chance to fulfill their dreams and to take their places as equal citizens of their country. It would have been a pleasure to meet the founder of this organization; unfortunately, he was out of town on business that day.

Asilo de San Vicente de Paul

Our next stop was at the Asilo de San Vicente de Paul, an orphanage in Paco, Manila, which promotes the welfare of orphans, abandoned and neglected children. Our visit there was cut short due to their on-going Christmas party preparations that day. The atmosphere was contagious; everyone was very excited about the holiday season. Fortunately, we had the chance to talk briefly to one of their facility's administrators and take some pictures.

Hospicio de San Jose

Our final visit was to the Hospicio de San Jose which is situated on an island on Pasig River. We were greatly impressed by the surroundings. The orphanage is just like a small community in its own right with trees and beautiful flower beds. The building is strong and solid and the yard is

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FAAGC treasurer Myrna Whitmire (left) presents FAAGC's donation check to an ERDA Foundation staffer as FAAGC Executive Board member Leah Cuaresma (right) looks on. Photo by Manny Cuaresma

The Children of Filipinos in America: The Challenge of Adaptation Across Cultures

by Cornelio G. Banaag, Jr., M.D.

A growing number of young Filipino-Americans are in search of their roots. Their parents, mostly professionals, came to the United States when U.S. immigration laws opened the gates to [foreign] professionals. These young people are seriously questioning the meaning of their hyphenated identity.

Growing up across two cultures — that of their parents and that of the U.S. where they are raised — many of these children feel they do not fully belong to either one. Are they the children of the “third culture”? How do their varying environments of home and community shape their personality? How can they best adapt to their cross-cultural environment? These are among the serious questions that are raised by the Filipino parents and their children in America.

Cultural Influences

Anthropology and psychology tell us that culture (the set of values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that are shared and transmitted between generations) shapes the developing personality from infancy through adulthood. Cultural influences are woven into the personality like a tapestry. The weaving is done by way of child-rearing practices, family relationships and community interactions. As the number of interactions expands and changes, the mix of new influences are woven into more and more complex patterns in the evolving personality.

Child-rearing Patterns

What happens in differing child-rearing practices? Is there really evidence that differing child rearing practices produce different personality characteristics? Studies done on Japanese and American children consistently show that American mothers encourage their children to be more ac-

tive, while Japanese mothers soothed and quieted their babies. American mothers view their babies as separate and autonomous individuals who should learn to think and do things for themselves. Japanese mothers tend to view their babies as extensions of themselves. As they grow, American children tend towards verbal self-expression and personal autonomy, and are more physical and verbally assertive. In contrast, the Japanese children value group orientation and are physically and verbally restrained.

Filipino Values

Let us shift our focus to the effects of raising children in a culture that is new to their parents. What happens when Filipino parents, born and raised and educated in the Philippines migrate to America and raise their children there?

The present breed of Filipino parents have been raised in some ways similar to (although not quite like) the

“... it takes a lot of courage to feel proud of being a Filipino.” ... Sadly, many young Filipino-Americans grow up not knowing much about the Philippines and its rich cultural heritage.

Japanese style. We, the parents, were raised with values big on obedience for elders, suppressing self-expression and individual freedom in the interest of a group (the family), hierarchy of authorities in the family where there is a strong parental presence and authority, and children grow up into adults strong on *utang na loob*, *pakikisama*, *delicadeza* and *hiya*. [Editor's note: i.e., debt of honor, smooth interpersonal relations, sensitivity and strong shame, respectively].

Culture Clash

Therefore, as we raise our children in America, the conflicting values of the two cultures become highlighted: group vs. individual, extended

vs. nuclear family, interdependence vs. independence, conformity vs. competition, present vs. future orientation, patience and modesty vs. aggression and assertion, suppression vs. expression of emotions.

Successful adaptation and acculturation can be seen in the formation of various combinations of these personality traits. Yet, sometimes, these personality traits can bring about tensions between individuals (especially between the parents and their children) or within the individual.

Surely, across cultures there are inevitable conflicts between parents and their children as parts of the socialization process from childhood through adolescence. These developmental conflicts are softened and easily resolved when there is agreement between the behavior being shaped at home and the behavior expected in the community outside the home. There are

greater difficulties when the behavior being encouraged at home and the behavior expected in the community are in conflict with each other.

Parental Presence

One very notable feature in the family of Filipino and other migrants in America is the decrease of parental presence and authority. As soon as we Filipinos arrive in this country, working hard becomes a habit. We want to build a good life for us and our family. For many of us, there is the extended family network back home needing our help. Thus many Filipino parents in America may find themselves with two jobs, working 12 to 14 hours a day, 7 days a week,

and on the week-ends still run a household in addition.

This situation substantially diminishes parental presence and authority over their children. Parent-child contacts take the form of telephone calls or messages left on the refrigerator door, or reminders of the child's schedule for ballet or piano lessons. Most conversations, if any, are on the need to achieve and be busy. This situation puts more stress on the parents, than on the children.

The children learn quickly to adapt. They become quickly independent and increasingly exposed to influences from the television, peers, and the school, with a minimum of parental presence to balance those influences. The children grow up with varying degrees of sense of affluence. Many grow up as latch-key children, with minimum affective contact with their parents and maximum contact with television, video programs, toys, books, computers.

There are, of course, the occasional getting together with Filipino families and friends, the closest to recreating an extended family in America. As it often happens, the children segregate and do what all children of the world do when they get together: play with each other, sometimes bragging about their latest toys and video games. The grown-ups joke and talk about topics that, invariably, are variations of the same themes: the good life in America, the conditions in the Philippines, and in certain instances, helping the Philippines get better. The children overhear such themes at home or in parties, but are hardly directly talked to by their parents. As one Filipino-American teen-ager noted: “My parents didn't have time to teach me anything about the Philippines.”

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The Children of Filipinos in America: The Challenge of Adaptation Across Cultures (continued from Page 4)

Effects on Children

What is the effect on the children? They grow up with a predominantly white American mind-set and with some snatches of bad images of the Philippines. And expectedly, when children become teenagers, the family is never the same again. The rapid biological and psychological changes of adolescence put to a strain even the best relationship between adolescents and their parents. With an intense need to be independent, the adolescents begin to rebel in varying degrees and ways. With an urgent need to define themselves, to establish an identity that is acceptable to themselves and their peers, many reject their parents' ways, especially their "Filipino ways."

Feeling anxious, the parents then impose and expect standards of behavior that worked for them back home, treating their children in the same caring ways their own parents treated them — frequent telephone calls, reminders not to stay up late, not to stay out late, etc. — and it doesn't work because they are two worlds apart. And the difference between their two worlds becomes more stark when the teen-agers have grown up knowing very little of the parents and the culture in which their parents grew.

With all the miseries and problems we faced while growing up back home, it takes a lot of courage to feel proud of being a Filipino. The sad thing is we have a full generation of young people who knew nothing of the Philippines.

Identity Crisis

As they grow up, our Filipino children in America begin to be aware of being Filipino-American. This awareness generally starts in high school when they are teen-agers protesting and distancing themselves from their parents. This is also the time when one's

identity is a central and sensitive issue.

As Philippine-born but U.S.-raised Antonio de Castro, an associate professor teaching Philippine-American history and culture at San Francisco State University, puts it: *"To make it in the U.S., many Filipinos growing up there try to blend in or assimilate as much as possible, very often with the encouragement of their parents. The price they pay is the loss of their Filipino culture and identity."*

"... In saying that they didn't want to be Filipino anymore, these kids were denying a large part of themselves and making themselves into photocopies of Americans. . ."

"How can you develop self-esteem, self-confidence, unless you yourself come to terms with who you are? . . . If you have a strong foundation of who you are, then you are able to withstand all this buffeting no matter what anybody says about you."

... The Philippines . . . is also a geography in one's heart and mind, for truly the Philippines is ultimately in the heart and mind of every true Filipino.

Realization

As the young Filipinos growing up in America become fully aware of being Filipino American, the question of being Filipino — foreign and yet so much part of one's self — becomes a serious one. Not knowing much of what it is and what it feels to be Filipino, many young Filipino-Americans are driven to know more about their Filipino heritage. Others reject the notion altogether and see themselves as part of white America.

To a great degree, the young Filipinos are not visibly and grossly discriminated upon on account of their race or color. The pain is more internal and takes the form of confusion. When a young lady I know would hear her parents

talk of going "home" to the Philippines when they retire, she found this confusing and anxiety-provoking because she knew no other home but the US. Another young Filipino-American woman became alarmed by her lack of knowledge of the Philippines when she took a college course on contemporary Asian history. She learned of the problems in the Philippines. She wanted to stand up and speak out that she felt there was something more to the Philippines than all these problems, but she did not know what to say. She felt deprived of knowing what she felt she had a right to know — that is, the other half of her Filipino-American self.

Towards Integration

Realizing the need to help our children grow knowing as much of the Philippines as they know of America — perhaps not to an equal degree but more than what they know now — the crucial question is:

how do you go about this? How do we teach our children about being Filipino as they grow up in America? How do we integrate the Filipino and American influences in their lives so that they can take with them the best of both worlds? If we knew an easy answer to these we will be the perfect parents that we all dreamed to be once upon a time.

But there are no perfect parents in real life. There are only "good-enough" parents who are sensitive to the needs of their growing children. Good-enough parents know that the needs of their children go beyond the material, that there are equally important needs that are psychological/emotional like affection, protection, a sense of security, a

strong sense of identity.

A Geography in the Heart

In our efforts to teach our children what the Philippines is about, it is good to remind ourselves and remember that the Philippines is not just a geography of small islands at the gate of Asia. It is also a geography in one's heart and mind, for truly the Philippines is ultimately in the heart and mind of every true Filipino. This is why we can never get rid of it, even as we lament all the sad things about it. The Philippines is something that we have internalized and made part of us as we grew up breathing its air, imbibing its smells, engraving its images into our memory.

How do we then begin to form the Philippines in the heart of a growing child so that when he/she becomes a young man or a young woman the Philippines does not become a totally foreign geography?

I imagine it will be the same process of early and continuous exposure to things Philippines: images of the Philippines like paintings hanging on the walls, or pictures of family and friends in a photo album, the smells and tastes of favorite Filipino foods (like *adobo*, *kaldereta*, *sinigang*, even maybe, *dinuguan*), sounds of Philippine melodies played in the living room.

Culture begins with its own language, although it does not end there. Therefore, the use of Philippine language should be encouraged not only among the grown-ups but also when talking to the children at home — of course, the English language will always be there. Along with favorite "stateside" collections in the house, there should be some icons or *santos* and wood carvings from Paete or Baguio, a few finely made baskets from the Mountain Province, or colorful table runners from the T'bolis or the

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Children of Filipinos in America (continued from Page 5)

Ifugaos. During Thanksgiving, the table can be graced not only by a huge baked turkey and cranberry sauce, but also *lechong kawali*, *pancit*, and *leche flan* all on a table covered with finely woven and embroidered Philippine table cloth made of cotton or ramie. And at Christmas time, the house is graced not only by a Christmas tree with blinking lights but also by a Philippine lantern (*parol*).

Then we parents have lots of stories to tell of how it was like growing up in our little towns and cities, how we were disciplined by our parents, not to teach a lesson of obedience, but to share the part of our lives they never will know unless we share them. Not only are children delighted by such story-telling times, and feel much closer to us, but our stories provide a sense of continuity in their lives, serving to bridge the distance between the culture of their parents and the culture of their present society. As the children grow, there should be books and magazines about the Philippines along side all the American publications that we buy.

Balanced Sense of Self

This is how our children

will slowly incorporate the Philippines — or pieces of it into their hearts and minds. The Philippines to them will be not some mysterious land of poverty or distant home to their parents, but a living part of their Filipino-American selves, producing a balanced sense of self that honors both cultures. They can fully embrace the culture of their parents and still lay claim to their American upbringing.

Editor's Note: Dr. Banaag is a notable child psychiatrist in the Philippines and a World Health Organization consultant on mental health. Before he returned to the Philippines, he was a resident of Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

Initially published in the **Fil-Am Bulletin** in its Winter 1995-96 issue (February 1996), the foregoing article is an edited version (due to space limitation) of the "rather long" original article written in late 1980s. Its message is still very relevant and applicable today.

The author's brother, Cesar Banaag, living in Austria, furnished a copy of the original article (with a note to "feel free to print the entire article or quote/edit it") upon request by the **Fil-Am Bulletin** Editor who, in the mid-1990s, found a passing reference to it "wrongly posted" in an Internet discussion group on Philippine science & technology. Contact the Editor for a copy of the full article. ❖

Orphanage Donations (continued from Page 3)

big for the children to run around.

At this orphanage, we were welcomed by the assistant director who led us around the premises. As we visited each room, we encountered many children, all with tremendous smiles in their faces. The cribs in the infant room were all filled. We were extremely pleased to see the trained caregivers (some of them doing on-the-job training) working with the young children and clearly enjoying their time with them. We felt proud of them because in spite of their meager salary, these caregivers have made a strong commitment and sacrifice to care for these children.

We were amazed with the tour after initially expecting the orphanage conditions to be dismal. What we saw, however, were greatly improved conditions; the facility was clean and more importantly, the children were well-fed and clothed.

All in all, we feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to take part in something that was quite in keeping with the true sense of Christmas. It was wonderful to see something accomplished that the FAAGC had a role in.

Thank you, everyone: the checks were gratefully received, and it was definitely worth it to see the looks of joy in those children's faces. ❖

ACHIEVEMENTS GALORE

Now that the school year will soon be over, it's time to start preparing for the **FIL-AM BULLETIN's** annual "ACHIEVEMENTS GALORE" issue. In the next issue of the Association newsletter, we would like to make a special recognition of the graduation and recent scholastic, athletic, academic, and other achievements of Fil-Am adults and children in the area. This issue also serves as a historical record of what the area Fil-Ams have done.



Provide us with the details (*full name, school, grade, awards, college plans, etc.*) as well as a photograph (*preferably with light background*) so we can give due recognition of your and/or your children's achievements. Contact the Editor at **738-0372** or e-mail (**FilAmSC@yahoo.com**) with the details no later than **July 11, 2008**. ❖

THE PHILIPPINES IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

PHILIPPINE MALLS According to Forbes.com, as of 2007, the Philippines has **three of the largest 10 malls in the world**, based on the "gross leasable area" (GLA) — "the amount of space for revenue-generating activities like retail, dining and amusements." All three are owned by SM Prime Holdings controlled by Henry Sy; the SM Group is in the process of acquiring three malls in China located in Jinjiang, Xiamen, and Chengdu. The world's two biggest malls currently are in China, each with over 6 million square feet of GLA; when it opens sometime in 2008, the Dubai Mall will become the largest with 12.1 million square feet.

World Rank	Name	Location	Year Opened	Gross Leasable Area (Million Square Feet)	Remarks
3	SM Mall of Asia	Pasay City	2006	4.2	First Olympic-sized swimming pool and first IMAX theater in the Philippines, spans four buildings, 20-seat trams take shoppers around
6	SM Megamall	Mandaluyong City	1991	3.6	Bowling, ice skating, 12-cinema movie theater, arcade game, medical clinic
10	SM City North EDSA	Quezon City	1985	3.0	First major "mega mall" built by SM Prime Holdings. Five-story, over 100 retail outlets & restaurants, 12 cinemas, bowling alley, skating rink

Source: **World's 10 Largest Shopping Malls**. http://www.forbes.com/business/2007/01/09/malls-worlds-largest-biz-cx_tvr_0109malls_slide_2.html. Retrieved 3/10/2008.

Quick link: <http://tinyurl.com/jrydpk>

FILIPINO BILLIONAIRES Also, *Forbes* Magazine has ranked two Filipinos to be among "the 1,125 richest people on the planet." In its annual special report on the world's billionaires released on the web on March 5, 2008 and in its March 24, 2008 magazine issue, *Forbes* ranks **Lucio Tan** (age 73) as tied for 785 and **Henry Sy** (age 83) as tied for 843. Tan, who controls Philippine Airlines, University of the East, Philippine National Bank, Fortune Tobacco and Asia Brewery, among others, have a net worth of \$1.5 billion. Shopping mall tycoon Sy, the founding leader of the SM Group, has a net worth of \$1.4 billion. The net worth values of No. 1 Warren Buffett (age 77) and No. 3 Bill Gates (age 52), both of the U.S., are \$62 billion and \$58 billion, respectively.

Source: **The World's Billionaires**. http://www.forbes.com/business/billionaires/2008/03/05/richest-people-billionaires-billionaires08-cx_ik_0305billie_land.html.

Retrieved 3/10/2008. Quick link: <http://tinyurl.com/22xfoc>

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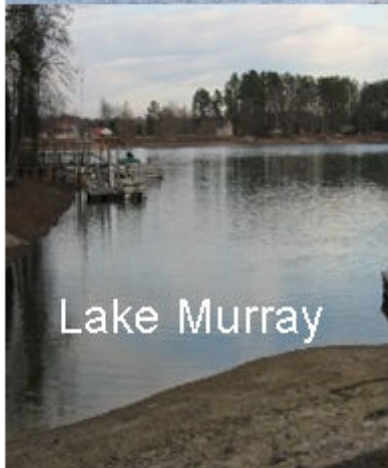
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FILIPINO—AMERICAN Association of Greater Columbia CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- * **March 23, 2008** (Sunday)
 - ▶ **Columbia Fil-Am Annual Spring Picnic & Easter Egg hunt**
 - ◆ **Sesquicentennial Park** [(803) 788-2706]
9564 Two Notch Rd., Columbia, SC 29223
- * **April 5-6, 2008** (Saturday -Sunday)
 - ▶ **Columbia International Festival**
 - ◆ **SC State Fairgrounds**
1200 Rosewood Drive, Columbia, SC 29201
- * **Summer 2008**
 - ▶ **Columbia Fil-Am Annual Summer Picnic**
 - ◆ TBA
- * **September 2008** (Saturday)
 - ▶ **Columbia Fil-Am 19th Annual Gala**
 - ◆ TBA



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for the clickable direct links to the websites mentioned in this issue of the *Fil-Am Bulletin*.
Current and some past issues (*in color*) of the *Fil-Am Bulletin* are also available online.




* * * *Just A Reminder* * * *

Membership renewal for the Fil-Am Association Year 2007-08 is now due for many members. Please check the mailing address label below — *if there are three asterisks (***) on the line above your name*, then your membership has expired or will expire on the date specified after the asterisks.

Your membership renewal and prompt payment of dues are crucial to the continued operations and success of the FAAGC in our community. Please send your membership dues as soon as possible. Dues can also be paid at the Easter picnic. If there are membership renewal questions, contact **Helen Alon** (738-0372; helenqda@yahoo.com).

The **FAAGC 2007-2008 Directory of Members** will be distributed during the picnic to those who did not get a copy during the last Christmas Party.

FIL-AM BULLETIN of the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC

P.O. Box 24112, Columbia, SC 29224



Spring 2008



Volume 17, Number 2



Reminders:

- * **Columbia FIL-AM Annual Spring Picnic / Easter Egg-hunt** will be held on **Sunday, March 23, 2008** at the **Sesquicentennial Park**.

**TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL
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