

PCSNJ, Inc. Induction Ball 2012: A Night of Elegance, Fun, Optimism and Goodwill

By Ruben & Tippin Alvarez

There was a collective gasp and wow when the windows to the New Jersey Aquarium became visible to the guests at the induction ball of the new set of officers of PCSNJ, Inc. One gets the feeling of having a ball under the magnificence of a colorful ocean. The guests were so awed by the ambiance created by the different species of fish swimming in the gigantic tank that many stood in front of the fish displays to have their photos taken.

The Rev. Darius Nable gave the invocation for the evening. The guests dined on a menu of surf and turf (chicken and fish fillet) and a vegetarian meal which were cleverly and artistically presented. The meal was capped by a sinfully delicious chocolate cake. The affair



PCSNJ, Inc. President Senen Fontanilla delivers a speech at the induction ball. Standing on the side is Melissa De Leon, PC Youth President

was filled with elegance with ladies in their gorgeous outfits and many gentlemen in the traditional barong tagalogs. The night was filled with endless excitement and fun. Hermie Aczon, the charming president of the Filipino Executive Council introduced the guest speaker, Mario De Leon Jr. Consul General of the Philippine Consulate in

New York. The Consul General heaved praises on the organization not only for its many service oriented programs but also for the way it was set up by its founders. He pointed out that presidents actually serve for six years. The first two are as president elect or president in training, then two years as the serving (Continued of page 2)

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FROM PCSNJ YOUTH GROUP... By Jeff Tagle



PCSNJ Youth, members backstage at the Third Annual TOFA-NY Awards at Carnegie Hall in New York City

At first, we started out as a small group of friends with a common interest in dancing. After dancing for fun at the PCSNJ Induction Balls, we were invited to perform at local events over the next few years. Recently, we performed at the Tribute to the Philippines in Ocean City, NJ on Saturday, July 20, 2013. There, GMA7 recognized our talents and cordially invited us to perform at the 3rd Annual TOFA-NY Awards at Carnegie Hall. Throughout countless hours of practice, numerous performances, and fun experiences, we never thought that our efforts would eventually lead us to perform alongside other talented performers at such a prestigious event. Shortly after receiving the invitation, we also received the news that we have been nominated for an award in the Youth & Sports category, which we could not believe. Although we did not win the award, it is gratifying to know that we are becoming recognized for the hard work that we have put into this group over the past few years. Before the show, we had a chance to walk around and observe the beautiful City of New York. We checked into our room, found a place to eat, and shopped at the nearby Uniqlo store. (Continued on page 8)



PCSNJ, Inc. Induction Ball (continued from page 1)

president and then the final two as the immediate past president who is more of an adviser who shares the wisdom of his experiences. He also praised the way the organization involves the youth. He emphasized that this is a great thing as the adult members are already training those who will take over the organization when they are gone.

Liz de Leon, the president-elect, gave a warm welcome to the guests and painted a good picture for the organization's future. Melissa de Leon and Joseph Valenzuela in an entertaining manner, shared information about the specific accomplishments of Filipinos in the United States. Then there was the gifted April Talangbayan who shared her musical talents by playing her flute and giving a lively rendition of a popular song. The guests were further entertained by the line dancers dressed like beautiful women from the Middle East complete with minicrowns on their heads, performing their dance "Under the Sea" arranged by lively Purie Ancheta and the ever smiling Annabelle Rios. The big production of a Santa Cruzan and a barrio fiesta where the youth members, zumba and line dancers and some friends from other organizations combined their talents under the direction of the creative

Diana Bondad and the able choreography of Cynthia Aragoncillo, brought smiles and cheers from all.

The biggest laugh came when the incoming president, Senen Fontanilla, displayed his comedic flair when he was introduced by the mistress of ceremony, the vivacious Grace Rustia. Senen came into the hall surrounded by his strapping sons-in-law dressed in black suits complete with dark glasses pretending as his bodyguards. But when Senen spoke, the comedy was gone and the guests heard a prolific speaker, gracious but with a steel demeanor and he presented an inspiring and optimistic message for the future of PCSNJ, Inc.

Melissa de Leon, the incoming president of the youth group and lovely daughter of Liz de Leon also gave her acceptance speech. She spoke about her enthusiasm in being given the chance to serve the Filipino community and to work cooperatively with the adult members. She pointed out that she is following her family's tradition of involvement and service to the community as members and leaders of PCSNJ, Inc. Her mother is the president-elect and her older siblings, Miggy and Michelle, are former presidents of the youth group that she will now lead.

Frances Estella gave her farewell message and she thanked all those who supported and worked with her to make her term as president memorable and

successful. Senen, assisted by his lovely wife, Miriam, in a heavenly blue evening gown, formally presented Frances a plaque and a bouquet of flowers to express the gratitude of PCSNJ, Inc. and the community for her dedicated services as the president for 2010 – 2012.

Senen also formally thanked his brother, US Navy Lt. Commander Noel Fontanilla who flew in from Washington State with his family to be the inducting officer. He also thanked his sister, the talented dancer and energetic organizer, Sylvia "Bingle" Tagle for serving as the chairperson of the induction ball.

As Jerry Ancheta, the DJ provided the music for the dancing pleasure of all, the guests seem to understand Senen's message that PCSNJ, Inc. is but a big family. With all the pageantry, elegance, and excitement, all get that warm feeling that everybody is a valued and an appreciated member of that PCSNJ, Inc. family who came together to enjoy each others company. The spirit of togetherness, goodwill, and optimism permeated the air as all danced the night away.

THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE By Pres. Senen Fontanilla

Over a year ago, I was inducted as the 22nd President of PCSNJ and gave my presidential speech at the Camden Adventure Aquarium with sharks and other marine life in the background. I loved this nautical environment having served in the US Navy for 8 years and hoped that my presidency will have "Fair Winds and Following Seas".

Since our inception 27 years ago, our association has been centered on "community". Communities are made up of families so it is important that the institution of the family is fostered. The family must work together to keep the house running and also emotionally encourage and support one another. Our service to one another in the family unit is a reflection of what we do in community service. In

community service, we work together to keep the community running. We help with events, attend meetings, implement programs and we also emotionally support and encourage the community's dreams and goals. And when necessary we lovingly criticize so the community can change for the better. The bottom line is - we must work together. Together, we can accomplish so much. I need the help of

every member of PCSNJ to make this association greater and more responsive to the needs of the community.

I closed my inaugural speech with the Boy Scout Oath – an oath that guided me in my younger years as a boy scout and still continues to guide me in my mature years.

"On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and to my country, and to obey the scout law. To help other people at all (continued on page 5)

LITA ABELE : A PRIDE OF FILIPINOS

By Ruben Alvarez

Beneath that exterior of grace and humility is a woman with endless accomplishments gaining recognition and respect in the business world. Her life is a testament that courage, perseverance and a willingness to learn can lead to great things. Lita's willingness to share her life sends a message of hope to those who struggle but still dare to dream about better lives. After earning a degree in education and a brief stint teaching in a Catholic high school she came to the USA to seek a greener pasture. She found employment as a nanny but she was maltreated. She was forced to eat leftovers out a single porcelain plate kept under the kitchen sink, forced to work for 24 hours and even denied heat during cold winter nights. However, against all unimagin-

able odds and gargantuan barriers she rose to be a very successful and respected business woman. She got involved in lumber and catapulted her lumber business into a major company. Her US Lumber Inc. on which she serves as the CEO was ranked by the Philadelphia Business Journal as one of the top 25 fastest growing companies in the region in the years 2000 and 2001. In 2003 the company's sales topped \$5 million. But in 2008 it went further and topped an impressive \$6.5 million. Because of the success of the lumber company under her supervision Lita is often invited to speak on television business shows and was once the main featured guest on channel 6 "Prime Time With Gary Papa". She has been featured in major newspapers not only in the USA but also in the Philippines. She was once the



main featured story on the Courier Post. But she was also featured as a business personality in Philippine papers like The Philippine Star, Filipino Reporter and StarWeek.

Lita is also an advocate of various social issues. She has spoken/lectured about social issues like diversity and barriers to success. She has authored some chapters in books. In the book The Self Architect: Redesigning Your Life she wrote the chapter "Breaking

with Strength and Structure". In the book Vision For Success she wrote the chapter entitled "Diversity and Leadership". Proud of her heritage as a Filipina she also supports Philippine organizations. She supports the Philippine Nurses Association of Southern New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the Executive Council of Greater Philadelphia, serves as advisor to Folk Arts Society, is an active member of the Philippine Community of Southern New Jersey (continued on page 8)

TIANGGE AT THE PARKING LOT By R. Alvarez

There were shoes, paintings, toys, clothes, arroz caldo, suman, bibingka, atsara, collectibles and many more. Such greeted the eyes of shoppers who went to the PCSNJ parking lot looking for exceptional bargains. The Tiangge went on as planned by our energetic past president Ali Magpantay last October 19. For a fee of \$10 dollars people were able to get a table and set up their wares for sale. At 6:00 in the morning Ali, Emma Sosa, Mabel and Jojo Jordan and family as well as members of the PC Youth Group were at the center ready to give assistance to the sellers. While still dark, Clem Rosero was setting up his table at 6:30. But no sooner other sellers started arriving to get a head start on the anticipated shoppers. Manang Ketang's suman, bibingka, turon and barbecue sold out. However, some shoppers were disappointed as they still remember Manang Ketang's tapa, longaniza and tosino which she sold last year. She explained that she was just too busy to make the delicacies in time for the tiangge. But Tippin Alvarez's

arroz caldo was a real hit. Her first big pot of arroz caldo sold in 30 minutes. Because people wanted to buy more, Tippin had to go home and make another big pot to sell which was again immediately sold out. Others went home with jars of Inday Jardinico's tasty atsara. One also described the brazo de Mercedes that she ate as "heavenly".

PCSNJ, Inc. would like to thank the families who donated many items to the PC youth table. The proceeds from the sale will go to the various PC Youth projects. The PC youth manned their table with exuberance and enthusiasm.

As Ruben Alvarez, a shopper, was leaving he heard Zeny Ortega, a seller, shouting out to him "Ruben I am glad you told me about the tiangge. I made money here and I had fun!"

Well that is Ali's idea of the Tiangge, to get rid of items you no longer need in your house, have fun doing it and make a little money at the same time while supporting the worthy projects of PCSNJ, Inc. It was a "win-win" situation for the sellers, the shoppers and the organization.



FROM THE SENIOR CITIZEN COMMITTEE: A MEMORIAL SERVICE

By Jingkie Aseron, Committee Chairperson

The Senior Citizens' Committee of PCSNJ Inc. is blessed and honored to have an annual Memorial Prayer Service to remember the deceased loved ones of our families and friends. The memorial for this year was held last November 2nd from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the center. Edwina Jardinico, chairperson for the event, was Master of Ceremonies. The program started officially with the Entrance of Colors by Nap Juliano and Efren Salugao. This was followed by the singing of the National Anthem by the PCSNJ Choir led by our music director Jojo Jordan and accompanied

by Chel Rodriguez on his guitar.

Our members Eby Banas, Joe Magana, Nap Juliano, Efren Salugao, and Ben Ramos called out the names of our loved ones. Those remembered were: Zenaida Tullao Alcaraz, Cirilo Baytan, Roberto Briones, Laura Calvelo, Aguinaldo Fontanilla, Petra Halina, Cirilo Jardinico, Sergio Morales Jr. Bienvenido Ongkingko, Benito Isaac Pacho, Rodolfo Pasion, Amelia Raymundo, Lorrie Magana Refugio, Virgilio Salugao, Ed Torio, Amabilis Cabahug Ramos and Leona Ramos. Jessica Camiore presented

the names to Fr. John Thomas from Christ Our Light Parish for the blessing. Fr. Thomas blessed the names and pictures of our loved ones that were displayed on the front table with floral arrangements and votive candles placed throughout the center. Doming Camba led the community with the opening prayer. Our president Senen Fontanilla welcomed our members, friends and families. Then the choir sang "Buksan Ang Aming Puso" as the opening hymn. Liselle Towers read the 1st reading and the Gospel. After (continued on page 12)



Fr. John Thomas with attendees of the memorial service



Jingkie Aseron, Senior Citizens' Committee Chairperson, receiving a plaque from Dr. Ray Soriano, for her services as president of the PCSNJ, Inc 2000-2001. It was during her term when the organization acquired the PC Center.



COSTUME PARTY: A HALLOWEEN TREAT

By : Purie Ancheta

Halloween is a fun holiday celebrated on the night of October 31. When it started in the middle ages the holiday was referred to as "all evening of Hallow", "Hallow's evening" or "Hallowe'en" which were eventually shortened to "Halloween". Part of the celebration was wearing costumes and the practice of "souling". The poor people would knock on people's doors on November 1st begging for food on the promise that they will pray for

the departed relatives of the residents the next day, November 2nd. The whole practice came to be known in modern times as "Halloween", "Trick or Treat", "All Saints' Day" and November 2nd as "All Souls' Day".

PCSNJ, Inc. held the annual Halloween Party last November 1st from 8:00 to 12:00 p.m. sponsored and organized by its Pure Ener "J" line dancers. Both youngsters and the adults came together wearing their colorful and creative costumes. There was a lot of food donated by the vari-

ous committees which supplied energy for all to dance the night away. They danced hip hop, cha cha, jitterbug, swing and line dances. There were also games and costume contests. The winners of the "eyeball" game were Diana Bondad and Vina Marshal. Vina also won the "scariest" costume with her husband Craig. The PCY wearing a "court of owls" won the "most original" costume. The little children who also came with their parents and grandparents all look so enchanting and cute. Nalani Navarro, Micah Addun, Gabriel Dizon, Aaron and Anne Lapena charmed everyone as they danced,

smiled and played around

The Halloween Party is but one of the activities organized by the Pure Ener "J" Line Dancers to raise funds for the construction of the awning of the PCSNJ center. Kudos to the line dancers for their hard work and their valuable contributions to the organization! They are planning more fundraising fun events in the future. Thanks to the line dancers and all their supporters.





THE FILIPINIANA YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

By Frances Estella

On August 18, the PCSNJ, Inc. Scholarship Committee, in coordination with the Philippine Nurses Association of Southern New Jersey and Philadelphia hosted the annual Scholarship Recognition Awards and Ceremony at the Philippine Community Center. The following high school seniors who were awarded the 2012 Filipiniana Youth Scholarship Award by their respective schools based on criteria set by PCSNJ's Scholarship Committee

The invocation was delivered by Edwina Jardinico who also led in the singing of the national anthems. Dr. Consuelo Cagande-Maestrado, our guest speaker, gave an inspirational talk to our young scholars. Angela Mancao spoke on behalf of the awardees; and her parents, Alan and Sandra Mancao, shared their motivating skills with the audience. Noreen Delfin, PCY President, was given the Lily Ancheta Community Service award for her leadership and involvement in the community. Evelyn Tuanquin shared some words of

wisdom with the youth. The ceremony was well-attended and the program was ably planned by Lorelei Laurencio and Maria Ramos who also served as emcees. Thank you to all who helped make this affair a success: our award sponsors, Jerry Ancheta for sound production, Purie Ancheta, Edwina Jardinico and PNASJP members for lunch set-up and clean-up, Diana Bonadad and zumba participants for set-up. Last and certainly not the least, to the chair of the scholarship committee, Dr. Eileen Pelaez, and her members for coordinating the whole affair. ■

PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE (continued from page 2)

times. To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight."

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be of service to this community. It is my goal that my actions as president of PCSNJ will speak louder than any speech that I have delivered since my induction.

With less than a year left in my presidency, the Winds have been favorable and the Seas not too violent!

FILIPINIANA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES 2012:

Brandon Lim- Bishop Eustace Preparatory School
Gabrielle Alexis Rochino- Cherry Hill High School East
Darielle Nable- Cherry Hill High School West
Arthur Kevin San Jose- Deptford High School
Erika Encarnado- Gloucester Catholic High School
Chariz Novy Nicdao- Highland Regional High School
Angela Mancao- Pennsauken High School
Elisa Fae Obedoza- Washington Township High School
Antoinettes Grace Asis Ocampo- Williamstown High School
Patrick Laurencio- Vineland High School

FILIPINIANA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES 2013

DOREEN ARROYO - Eastern Regional HS
PHYLICIA PELLOT - Camden Catholic HS
MATTHEW ASIS - Williamstown HS
ANGELIE ITAAS - Gloucester Catholic HS
NOREEN DELFIN - Pennsauken HS
TATIANA MONYEEK MAGNO DIZON - Cherry Hill HS West
RAMIL ERASMO - Triton Reg HS
KEVIN LARA - Timber Creek Reg HS

PCSNJ IN THE EYE OF A MEMBER

By Maria Camaio

Though I am in my third year with PCSNJ, I still consider myself a fairly new member. As such, I am still experiencing a number of the activities we hold for the first time. Not too long ago, I was privileged to attend my very first PCSNJ Scholarship Awarding Ceremony. I would like to share that experience with you. I really had no expectations for this event. I just figured that this event was going to be a mere formality; we would

present the ten scholars and one youth leader with their awards. However, as the day unfolded, I quickly realized how wrong I was. The event began with a beautiful prayer from Tita Inday Jardinico. This was followed by an introduction from Lorelei Laurencio. Then the presentation of awards began. Before each scholar was called to the podium to receive their award, Maria Ramos would read their respective

background. This is when it became really interesting. I was so impressed with the achievements of each scholar. Not only did these young adults finish at the top of their graduating class, but they also excelled in other areas. Either in sports, the arts, other special interests and best of all...most were leaders in various organizations. A number of them were active in socio civic activities and some of them focused in

helping the Filipinos back home. I was so proud of each and every one of them. If our actions define who we are, then they have brought great pride to the Filipinos. Later on, Dr. Chichi Cagande shared an inspirational speech with our scholars. I loved her message of "follow your dream and persevere when challenges come your way". It was such a heartfelt and encouraging (continued on page 12)

From The Membership Committee: Bingle Tagle and Lyn Mangulabnan

PCSNJ, Inc. holds many fun activities. Recently members and their guests enjoyed the "Tiangge" and "Kamayan". There are regular weekly Zumba and line dance classes. Soon the organization will hold its annual Christmas extravaganza. People still remember the "High Tea" last year and various themed parties like "Cinco de Mayo", "Hawaiian Night" and "Halloween Party". The organization has sponsored "Balagtasan", "Art Exhibits" and many more cultural events. PCSNJ, Inc. is also a tax-exempt organization which has been sponsoring public service projects. It has sent aides to the Philippines during natural dis-

asters. It has co-sponsored consular services at the center where Filipinos were able to apply for dual-citizenship, renew passports and to attend to other legal matters in the Philippines. It has an active scholarship program that rewards excellent academic achievements among graduating high schools but also gives financial support to deserving college students in the Philippines. So Filipinos, whether fun or service oriented will find a place in the organization. Last July 2013, the organization voted membership categories along with their pertinent membership fees.

The Philippine Community has been making a difference in the Filipino com-

munity not only in the Southern New Jersey area but also in the Philippines. Any organization functions like an open circle where members go in and out of the circle depending on their life predicaments. Hence the perpetuity of any organization depends on members who are able to stay inside the circle. Alfred Manslow, a noted psychologist describes the levels of growth in people. He says that there are those people who are able to reach the level of growth where they seek to serve a wider cause as their final

legacy to humanity. These people find life rewarding and exciting to the very end. There are those however who never achieve that level of growth where they never seek to serve wider causes. After achieving their professional goals and material security they often end up asking what life is all about and spend their golden years with anxiety and feeling progressively useless. So PCSNJ, Inc. extends an invitation to all. Join us and make a difference while having fun at the same time. ■

PCSNJ MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Annual Membership: \$25 per person

Individual Lifetime membership: \$100

Husband and Wife Lifetime Membership: \$150

Former PCY Lifetime: \$50 (if paid before age of 21)

Annual PCY Membership: \$5

Spouse of Lifetime Member, late membership: \$50

GRADUATES – 2013 By Bingle Tagle

Each and every year, PCSNJ along with the community as a whole, recognizes the achievements of Filipino students. It is hard yet a happy job to track down all the students. We take pride in the accomplishments of our graduates. God bless all of you!

Heading to Cherry Hill High School East (CHHSE): Trina Camba, Alyssa Cayabyab, Jose Concepcion, Arianna Fontanilla, Aira Onate,

Evan de Vera, Joselle de la Torre, Timothy Vargas all from Rosa Middle School; Jamie Gonzales from Resurrection School; Julia Gabriel from Beck Middle School **Heading to Cherry Hill High School West:** Camille Cueto from Carusi Middle School **Headed to Ironwood High School (Arizona) ;** Jed Cueto from American School **From Lenape High School:** David Joaquin and Jennifer Reyes;



From Paul Paul VI:
Adrienne Vivero

College Bound Students From CHHSE: Nikko Erfe and Sabrina Laygo going to Rutgers University, Galilee Rodrigues goin to Camden County College and Jaquelin Malaran going to Stockton Univeristy

From CHHSW: Hubert Morales going to CCC Nursing; Jafil de Asis and Brandon Gaviola going to St. John University; Uriah

Cueto going to University of San Diego **From Robbinsville High School:** Mason Cueto to Rutgers University **From Merion Mercy Academy:** Melissa de Leon (PC Youth President 2012 -'13) to Northeastern University ; **From Pope Paul VI** Jada Miller going to Rowan University School of Nursing **From Ironwood High School - Arizona:** Alana Cueto going to Glendale Community College (continued on page 8)



WE DO NOT HAVE SPOONS AND FORKS By Ruben Alvarez

The tables were set not with plates and spoons but with banana leaves. With soap dispensers filled and with lots of paper towels, people washed their hands and settled down for a meal and to enjoy the company of friends. Such was the "kamayan" event organized by the Filipiniana Committee under the chairmanship of our tireless Aling Magpantay assisted by Diana Bonadad and other supporters

who wanted to re-experience this tradition in some Philippine "fiestas". Aling and Senen Fontanilla, our dedicated president (who often requests to include the word "handsome" in his descriptions) both gave the opening remarks. They expressed welcome, gratitude and appreciation for the continuing support of the public for all of the organization's projects. Jojo Jordan gave an inspiring opening prayer. By 3:00

p.m the food started coming. Fourteen tables were set up. Each paid \$15 to occupy a place. There were ten people seated at each table. True to the nature of fun loving people "the kamayan" also had some entertainment. Our resident musician/composer/singer, Efren Salugao gave his own beautiful twist to the song "Anak" that would have knocked Freddie Aguilar off the stage. The PC youth also gave a sample



of the dance they were scheduled to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City for the awarding of Outstanding Filipino-Americans in the category of Youth and Sports. Then many took the microphone to try (continued on page 12)

Filipino Language and Leadership Summer Workshop 2013

By: Linda Juliano, Chairperson, Educational Committee

Highly motivated and energetic twenty-one elementary and high school students, of ages of 8-20 attended the three full-day Filipino and Leadership Workshop from July 8-10 held at the Philippine Community Center in Stratford, New Jersey.

The topics discussed were "Philippine History, Language and Culture" by Ernie Arcilla, "Learning new Filipino words with proper pronunciation and communication" by Ruben Alvarez, "Filipino poems and songs" by Chel Rodriguez, "National Emblem", "Filipino Communicative Interactions and Grammar" by Linda Julia-

no, "Leadership in School and in the Community" by Myra Ortega, "Managing your Money Allowance" by Maria Ramos, "Cooking Pancit" with Lenny Perez, "Arts and Crafts" by Jingkie Aseron, and Filipino games of "tumbang preso", "Iring iring" and "Aso't Pusa" by Melissa de Leon.

Based on written evaluations by participants, the workshop was rated as excellent. (see box below for participant comments)



SEMINAR PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

History – The speaker did great; I love this summer camp; he's good at it; learned a lot.

Leadership in School and in the Community – it's fun letting people know who I am, even though I am different, doesn't mean I am weird. Also bullies are insecure and scared, I learned to be myself, learned that we're all different. I learned if I want something, you have to go after it and that dreams do come true.

Managing your allowance – excellent, very knowledgeable on finance and savings, learned loans and credit. Be careful with your money; different from debit and credit card. How to separate money.

Cooking pancit. The food tastes good; the pancit was very good and delicious. Philippine food is good. I love to learn how to make pancit; Phil food is different. I loved the cooking, it was fun, I loved this class this year

Learning national emblem, Filipino communicative interactions and grammar. Showed film on "Tingala sa Ibaba". Yes, it was excellent information. I learned much Tagalog and Filipino; will consider this summer camp in the future; she got everyone involved; know much about topic; extremely prepared, perfect.

Songs and poems - it was very fun singing new songs in the Phil, some Filipino words, the songs were very catchy, he talked about history, not just singing; great singing, how to pronounce Filipino words, , great job teaching songs, great job being prepared; do a great job next year; my favorite part was the together songs.

Alphabets and pronunciation – taught us that there are different ways to say Filipino words, alphabets, names of parts of body, how to pronounce words and some sounds of words have higher/lower ranges.



LITA ABELE: A Pride of Filipinos (cont. from page 3)

and has been a consistent sponsor and donor of the Filipiniana Youth Scholarship Award at Timber Creek High School.

On the "Women Owned Business Rankings" put out by the Philadelphia Business Journal, Lita's company has been in the top 100 for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. In addition, the journal also ranked her as number 35 amongst minority owned companies. To list Lita's accomplishments and awards would take volumes of books. Her local, regional, national and international awards have given her such a high degree of credibility that she gained the attention and respect not only of many high government officials and politicians but also of deans and presidents of

Universities. The latest feather she had put on her already crowded hat was when she accepted the responsibility of serving as a trustee of Rowan University in February of 2012. But Lita, in all her graciousness, also gives credits to her husband Merrill. Lita describes him as a loving and a dedicated good husband who opened her eyes to every possibility from the first time they met.

PCSNJ, Inc and your many friends continue to wish you success Lita, especially with your appointment as trustee of Rowan University. You are indeed A PRIDE OF FILIPINOS.

GRADUATES 2013 (continued from page 6)

College College Graduates: (continued on page 7) Christine Aquino (PC Youth President 1999) Masters in Social Work from New York University; Jenica Balmes – Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Rutgers University; Rianne Cueto (PCY President 2007) BSN, Magna Cum Laude from Rutgers University; Winchell Delfin BSN Cum Laude from Rutgers University; Jan Christopher de Guzman BS Biology from Rutgers University; Rebie Jane Guanzon BSN from Penn State University; Bonvinvent Hernandez BSN Magna Cum Laude from Rutgers University; Aia Nable -

Business Administration from Camden County College; Jamon Ramirez (PCY President 2006) BS Biology from Loyola University; Jesselyn Reyes BS Biologu from Rutgers University; Vivienne Valenzuela BSN Cum Laude from Rutgers University; Cory Roach BS Behavioral Neuro Science Magna Cum Laude from Rider University.

PCY Officers 2013-2014
President
 Dean Justin Sosa
Vice President
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Public Relations Officers
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 Arianna Fontanilla
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 Jeff Anonuevo
 JC Nicdao
 Miguel Valdez
 Eunice Nepomuceno

FROM PCSNJ YOUTH GROUP (from page 1)



Required to arrive at Carnegie Hall by 6, we spent the rest of our free time to relax and get ready. We arrived at Carnegie Hall, participated in the dress rehearsal along with the rest of the performers, and got dressed for our first performance of the night, which was also the opening performance of the program. For most of us, the nerves and anxiety did not kick in

until we stood backstage awaiting our name to be called. This was not the same old nerve-racking feeling that we experienced before any of our other performances. This feeling did not compare to the feeling we experienced before performing at Ocean City, PCSNJ Induction Balls, or the Philippine Independence Day Picnics. Rather, this was different. We were performing at an award ceremony that praises the accomplishments of Filipinos in the New York area. The audience consisted of Filipino spectators with high expectations for the program, and we were part of that program. This feeling was surreal. The host was

introduced, the national anthems were sung, and the opening remarks were spoken. Shortly after, our name was called to perform. The initial feeling of anxiety shortly diminished as soon as we entered the stage to the sound of applause. We danced with confidence in front of the crowd and it felt great. According to a few people, some of the attendees even praised our performance, stating that we were arguably the best performance of the night. Hearing that statement instilled a sense of accomplishment and pride in everything that we have done.

We would like to thank



GMA and TOFA-NY for allowing us to perform at this event. We would also like to thank our parents, families, friends, and the PCSNJ for their support and guidance throughout the years. Without all of them, we would not have had the pleasure to experience this moment. Thank you!





LET US GET FIT by Ruben Alvarez

Five years ago, Bingle Tagle was a regular client of Planet Fitness attending its aerobic program. She then got the idea that she should share the health benefits she is getting with the Filipino community. With the help of Diana Bondad, they joined efforts to establish an enjoyable exercise program at the Community Center. Bingle and Diana spread the news by word of mouth encouraging people to join regardless whether they are member or not of PCSNJ. Inc. Their goal was merely to convince people to make exercise a part of their routine.

The Zumba program started with only four participants which slowly grew to 10 after two months. Bingle and Diana, committed to their vision of a health program went on spreading the news about the zumba classes and encouraging people to come. Their efforts paid off and the attendance increased further. Bingle was able to recruit Lisa Mele, a certified Zumba teacher who was then teaching classes at Planet Fitness. By chance some Zumba dancers also met Cynthia Aragoncillo, a seasoned Zumba teacher. Cynthia volunteered to be the substitute teacher when Lisa Mele could not make it to the center. But when Lisa eventually quit, Cynthia agreed to completely take over for a nominal fee.

Cynthia says that she makes her exercise routine fun but also challenging enough to keep her students involved, interested and motivated. She explains that Zumba, in general is an aerobic dance exercise set to Latin music. She starts her classes with stretching exercises, followed by a warm up routine. She explain such are

important to prevent muscle damage. Then she builds up the tempo and the speed of the routines to slowly build up the heart rate. The last fifteen minutes of the routine involves the use of dumbbells weighing from half a pound to 3 pounds for muscle toning. The routine ends with a few minutes of "cooling down".

The Zumba routines were challenging. Every part of the body is exercised. There were movements that target specific body parts from the fingers to the toes. There was jumping, skipping, hip movements, head twitches, shoulder rolls, toe tapping and many more. There were forward, backward, sideward and full rotational movements of varying speed and slowly getting more complicated movement combinations. Cynthia is always in front shouting out instructions and encouraging words. She says she often makes up her own routines though she also adopts the routines she has learned from other places. She often attends Zumba instructor conventions. She has even stated using non-Latin music when she choreographs some of her routines. She smiled when she said she has used "Dahil Sa Iyo" during her cool down routines.

Most of the students are now able to keep up with Cynthia. The classes are a mixture of Filipinos, Americans and Mexicans age from 10 years to 74 years old. Diana said when they put a streamer outside the center announcing the Zumba classes, people living around the

center started attending. Because no membership contract is necessary and each is only required to pay \$6 when attending a class many find the deal very reasonable compared to what other physical fitness centers are offering. There seems to be warm accepting and supportive atmosphere existing amongst all who are exercising. They all seem to be happy to see each other as they wave and greet each other.

Some students explain that they found it difficult to keep up with the routine initially. But after a month of attending every week they were able to build up their endurance to keep up with physical demands of the exercise routines. Cynthia discourages stopping when unable to keep up. Instead she advises students to simply keep on moving. If unable to do the movements she asks that the students simplify them like walking instead of hopping forward or marching instead of jumping or keeping the hand down when unable to keep them up. Diana states that at the end of a class, a person would have burned 800 to 1000 calories on an average.

So for those who want to be fit and toned zumba classes are offered every Thursday at the Center from 7:30 to 9:00. Just come with your sneakers and your determination to be healthy. It does not matter how old or whatever your level of fitness. All will be welcome and all will be supportive in achieving your health goals.

ZUMBA – on its 2nd year at PCC! By Winchell Delfin

Christmas is around the corner, so what does that mean? Lots and lots of calories! But don't burn the calories walking on a treadmill or sitting on a stationary bike—that's boring! PCSNJ offers something much better, much more effective, and much more fun. ZUMBA! It is not just about exercising and burning

fat. Zumba is a party! It's about dancing and having fun. Sessions, instructed by Ms. Cynthia Aragoncillo, consist of 1.5 exhilarating hours of dancing to a variety of music such as cha-cha, salsa, merengue, bachata, reggaeton, (continued on page 12)



THE CULTURE OF CORRUPTION By Ruben Alvarez



Sometimes when I read about the jumper boys who steal from passing delivery trucks I often wonder why they engage in such activity. It is very easy to condemn them for their shameful and illegal behavior. But when I look at these jumper boys within the total tableau of poverty I also wonder how many of them resort to stealing because of hunger. Nothing can justify stealing but I feel that I should not be quick to condemn and pass judgment. I ask myself if I were a jobless father who after hard and sincere efforts still fails to earn money, will I be willing to steal. Will the sight of my starving children push me over the edge to do something dishonest out of desperation? I feel that although I am a moral person I will be inclined to do something dishonest for the mere survival of my family. I would rather live in shame than to see my children die with bloated stomachs, bulging eyes and emaciated faces due to hunger. It is a nightmare that we saw in Somalia, in the Sudan and even in other places mired in poverty and civil unrests.

If I can see possible reasons why a poor person might steal, it still boggles my mind what motivates a wealthy person who can afford all that his heart might desire to steal massive amounts of money. When I read about the PDAF corruption, the people involved are not poor and starving but rather wealthy and could very well afford lavish lifestyles probably until the day they die. Not only are they wealthy, but they also have power and high social standings. What then motivates them to steal? How do they justify their ac-

tions? How did they learn to be corrupt? Did their parents teach them what is right and wrong? Did their religion teach them morality? Did the schools teach them concepts of honesty and hard work? We were all born innocent but how and where did some of us learn to be corrupt? Is corruption a learned behavior or is it something genetic?

I am not all knowing to give answers with certainty and absolute veracity. I can only guess. And perhaps my imagined answers will even sound comical to all. After all I am a total stranger in the world of the wealthy. But do the wealthy steal because they want to be known as the ___ "wealthiest"? Will he consider his one billion in the bank a pittance knowing his next door neighbor has five billion? Has life become a contest amongst the wealthy as to who will have the most money? Does he steal just for the thrill of it? Has life become boring to those who can have anything and everything in life without lifting a finger? Has stealing become nothing but a game for the wealthy to play just to break the monotony of their privileged lives?

From the innocent babies how did they learn to justify their stealing? Were they taught the joy of greed ___ the joy of ownership as an end to itself? Is it similar to the Imelda shoe complex? I do not need more shoes but I am just thrilled to have more and more of them. I have all the money I need but I just want more and more of it. I am proud of have more and more money just sitting in some Swiss bank.

I do not believe that morality or immorality, greed or generosity, honesty or dishonesty, diligence or laziness, compassion or apathy are things that we are born with like the color of our skin. They are learned behaviors. As parents what kind of an influence did we have on our children? Did we preach and guide not just by words but also by our daily actions? Were our good words consistently observed in our actions? Do we behave with honor whether we are alone or in public? Do we behave the right way because IT IS THE RIGHT way not because we are afraid of punishment if we are caught? Did the children learn through our actions that it is okay to do the wrong thing if we can get away with it? I ask the same questions to the teachers, to our religious leaders, to our god parents, to our neighbors. I ask the same question to every adult in the Philippines whether they be rich or poor. What have we been doing to ensure that the youth of today will grow into moral adults who will take the helm of leadership in the Philippine government? I feel these are serious questions to ask or are we going to just hope that the Philippines will not just be reduced to a modern Sodom and Gomorra.

SHALL WE DANCE... (continued from page 11)

she started she did not know any of the dances but she just stayed at the back and watched. After a few weeks she can dance with the rest of the class.

Jerry and Annabelle repeated their invitation for all to come to the center every Wednesday at 7:30 rain or shine, snow or sleet as they never cancels classes. For a \$6 one can

become fit, prevent dementia, be the life of a party, win friends and have a lot of fun.



Shall We Dance . . . By Ruben Alvarez

Upon entering PCSNJ Center every Wednesday at 7:30 PM one will immediately notice the friendly and welcoming reactions of the people inside. This is the atmosphere of the line dance program of PCSNJ. Everybody is welcome whether one can dance or not.

The program has been headed by Jerry and Purie Ancheta who all work on a strictly voluntary basis and simply out of love for dancing. Jerry is the main teacher who teaches alternately and cooperatively with Annabelle Rios. The two have taught over 100 line dances in the course of seven years. Jerry often choreographs his own dance routines but sometimes he also imitates dance routines he has learned from other states or other countries. He also adds new variations to old routines.

Annabelle dances in the hip hop style. She attends formal classes in a dance school and shares what she has learned with the PC Center line dance students. The developing skills and confidence of her dancers have lead to the formation of the group PCSNJ Purenerj Line Dancers that performs during numerous public affairs. Annabelle choreographs routines that relates to themes of these affairs. They have performed during the annual events of other organizations making them

PCSNJ's ambassadors of goodwill. The group also represented the Philippines during tri-county sponsored International Day. When the consular office sponsored a Filipino Day in Ocean City, the line dancers worked cooperatively with the Zumba members in presenting a dance routine that was loudly applauded. When the Folk Arts Society sponsored a dance competition, the group took first place. With the public performances the group is also promoting PCSNJ, Inc. as an organization. It also made the dancers bond together as they get ready for their public appearances. This bond gets even stronger when all the dancers have pot luck dinners to celebrate those whose birthdays fall on the current month. In addition they hold themed social dance affairs like Hawaiian Night, Cowboy Night, Cinco de Mayo, Halloween Costume Party and many more activities to raise funds for PCSNJ..

Jerry says that one pays an entrance fee of \$6 to join his Wednesday classes. He gets on average of 20 students and he directs a portion of the entrance fees to the Lily Ancheta Memorial Fund in honor of his late wife. The memorial fund is then used to finance scholarships in the Philippines. As of the present the Memorial Fund supports two students. The rest of the money is di-

rected to building maintenance program. With an average earning of about \$400 a month, the line dance group was able to extend the wooden floors and to install a wall of mirrors in the main hall of the center. It has also provided a water cooler and hand dryers in the bathrooms. Jerry added that future earnings are now earmarked for the building's awnings.

With the twists, hops, shuffles, slides, taps and turns one cannot help but admire and wonder how long it took all the dancers not just to learn the countless number of step sequences and to also to execute them in perfect unison. The dance routines have different styles. There are line dances for hip-hop, tango, cha-cha, waltz, rumba, swing, cumbia, bachata, salsa and even Broadway is not exempted.

The dancers say they attend for various reasons. Nilo and Aida Mercado say that besides having fun line dancing also offers them mental gymnastics that can sharpen memory and prevent Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Precy Gomez explains that she got tired being a wall flower. Since she has learned how to do numerous line dances she is now often invited to parties. She is able to infuse life and vivacity to an affair as she teaches and leads the guests in to numerous line dance se-

quences. Becky Green attributes her slim figure and being fit to her weekly dance class attendance. The lovely April Talangbayan says since she started dancing, she has not only kept her body toned but has also raised her energy level --- -- something she appreciates since she needs consistent vitality as a stage performer. All the ladies also said in unison that knowing line dances has given them independence and freedom to dance since they no longer have to depend on husbands to take them to the dance floor. Lynn Mangulabanan feels that a line dance class is a perfect setting to make new friends and to branch out socially. She believes that dancing is a healthy exercise that promotes friendship amongst the dancers. She regards dancing and making friends are her life's "stress relievers". Letty Caberto however looks at line dancing at center with an altruistic component. Besides, from the exercise and the fun she gets, she also likes the idea that some of the money paid at the door are used to help in paying the tuition fees of some poor students in the Philippines.

Jerry continues to invite people to attend his classes. He says that he takes the time to teach new dancers on the side so they do not feel intimidated when they see the high level of the regular attendees. April Talangbayan says that when (continued on page 10)

**PC IN THE EYE OF A MEMBER**

(continued from page 5)

message. By this time, I had regretted that I didn't bring my children with me to this event. I would have loved for them to hear that our Filipino youth are capable of achieving scholastic excellence, making a difference in their chosen communities, being leaders in various fields, and still participate in their artistic or athletic interests. I would have loved for them to realize that they are capable of all these too. More importantly, I

want them to be proud of their heritage and be inspired to be the best they can be. The recognition of these scholars by PCSNJ that day would have achieved all that for me. Alas, I missed my chance that day. However, I look forward to next year. You can be sure that my children will be in attendance. I encourage all of you to bring your children and grandchildren as well. I promise you, it will be worth it! ■

A MEMORIAL SERVICE

(continued from page 4)

the Choir sang "Do Not be Afraid" Fr. John inspired all with his reflection on "Death & Dying". The choir sang "Panangutanan" as the closing hymn after which our President -Elect Dr. Liz de Leon gave the closing remarks.

The Memorial Committee served merienda after the service, thanks to the combined efforts of Mildred Saldana and Nora Ronsario. The two made sure we had enough egg rolls, pancit and bread and desserts. They also made sure serving was flawless avoiding long waits.

Events like the Memorial Service are only successful through the efforts of many caring members, families and friends, I am very grateful for everyone's participation to have a memorable event for our LOVED ONES. ■

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We Have No Spoons
(from page 7)

their talents as stand up comics. Some people got as lot of laughter but there were some people who probably should have practiced the art of telling jokes a little bit more. As everybody pitched in cleaning the place in the spirit of "bayanihan" the success of the event made the people ask Ali if she can also hold a kamayan breakfast. Some people just can't stop dreaming about tapsilog, tocilog, log-silog and whatever log-log that PC might bring to the table. ■



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ZUMBA ON ITS 2ND YEAR (continued from page 9)

pop, modern hip-hop, and music from the 60's, 70's and 80's to name a few. A recently added portion to our Zumba class is "Zumba Toning". For about 15-20 minutes during class, we dance with 1-2 lb hand weights (3-5 lbs for the gentlemen). You don't need to be a talented dancer, you don't need to memorize the steps or execute each steps perfectly. The only thing that matters is that you're smiling, laughing, and that your heart is dancing to the beat. What I love about Zumba is that the routines are extremely easy to follow and everyone's experiences vary. You are never too young or old to join us. We've had classmates as young as 7 years old to classmates who are "young at heart". ZUMBA IS FOR EVERYONE!

I hope to see you and your friends at our Zumba parties in the Philippine Community Center every Thursdays from 7:30pm – 9:00pm. Don't forget to wear comfortable sneakers, bring bottled water, a towel and if you like to participate in toning, bring your hand weights. You might even win our weekly raffles for a free Zumba class.

After becoming a part of the Zumba family, you will not feel as guilty indulging in an extra slice of ham, crispy pata or lechon this season! ■

Classes - \$ 8.00 – non-PCSNJ member
\$ 6.00 – PCSNJ member
\$ 5.00 – students (ID required)
Contact: Diana Bondad (856) 278-0231