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photography



InLife

Robot
a must
visit bar
in Manila

2011
The year
that was

The top
five things
to consider
when starting
a new
business

HOW TO
LOSE WEIGHT
without going
on a diet!

Make way for the

Badato Brothers

World class Filipino Australian Kickboxers!

Plus The Filipino Community Centre...A dream or a nightmare?

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The Badato Brothers

Find out all about the brothers who are making waves in the kickboxing scene!



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Editor's Notes



InLife magazine? So what is this magazine all about? Well the concept for InLife Magazine was derived from the need to establish a publication that will act as a reference point for Filipinos navigating their way through the hustle and bustle of the daily grind in Australia. InLife offers its readers stories of achievers, local up and coming talents, local businesses, community leaders as well as community news. InLife magazine is also absolutely FREE and distributed through a network of Filipino stores and various events so there's no excuse not to get a copy and read it. The magazine is released on a quarterly basis so please keep an eye out for it.

Most magazines publish news and information and are separated from their audience, InLife Magazine is you, him, her and me, we are the audience. We are out there participating with the readers, taking their pictures and making them a part of our magazine. InLife Magazine puts a world of information in your hands, spend time with us and watch us grow!

Mike Ilagan

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I had an affair with my best friend's fiancé, and this fact still haunts me to this very day

All three of us were actually old high school friends. We used to do everything together; we used to sleep over at each other's houses and we used to just talk about anything and everything under the sun. Everything was just fine and dandy when one fateful day my friend Max told me that he has actually fallen in love with Miranda and apparently, she has fallen in love with

I had an affair with my best friend's fiancé

him too. Little did Max know that I also had real feelings towards Miranda, but since my friend was also in love with her, I just decided to keep my feelings to myself and back off. Everything changed after his confession, Miranda would call and text me and I would just ignore her in an effort to stay out of trouble. I avoided her at all costs even though it was painful...

A few months later after this confession, Max told me that they were engaged already and they have both decided to throw an engagement party at Miranda's house. All our other friends were going so of course I also had to go as well even though I felt awkward to avoid any speculation. So I went, and as I stood outside Miranda's house ringing her doorbell, guess who opened the door? It was none other than Miranda herself in a sexy low cut pink dress, she looked STUNNING. I said hello to her nervously My heart was beating very fast.....

Time flew very quickly that night and before you know it, it was late, and everyone had gone home including Max. I quickly said my goodbyes to her as well and was about to dash off to my car when when to my surprise she stopped me on my tracks and begged me to stay a bit so we can talk. So I reluctantly stayed, we drank a bit more and reminisced about the good old days. And the more we talked the more I realized how much I missed her... I thought to myself, here's a girl that is just perfect in every way, and she had to fall for my best friend....

Life can be TWISTED sometimes.

She then asked me why I was avoiding her, and I just kept on making up excuses, until she got completely annoyed so I had no choice but to fess up. I realised that this was the first time Miranda and I had ever been alone. Fueled by a gamut of emotions I told her that I've always been in love with her, and that seeing her and Max together made me so uncomfortable that I could barely stand it. And that's the main reason why I never had a relationship in all the time that she's known me.

After I said that she was STUNNED. And what happened next was quite shocking to my senses - Miranda suddenly leaned over and kissed me! Of course, I couldn't help but kiss her back. Our kisses then became longer and more passionate and before I knew it, things had moved into the bedroom and Miranda and I had made love. That thought didn't even cross my mind though until it was far too late to undo.

I woke up around 10am the next day with this massive headache. Her head was leaning on my shoulders and we were locked in an embrace. She woke up almost the same time as I woke up. I kissed her gently in the forehead and told her that what happened was wrong since she was already engaged to



my best friend. I also told her that she will never hear from me again after today because no matter how much I love her ... I still had to do the right thing... I gazed at her beautiful eyes and tears were streaming out of it.... I gently wiped the tears off her face and asked her why she was crying...

She told me that she's actually in love with me... I was SHOCKED.

I asked her how this is possible when she's already engaged to my best friend?? She then said that she only started going out with Max because I disappeared from her life. I never returned her phone calls nor answered her text messages. Because she got lonely, she just ended up with my best friend...

I was totally GOBSMACKED.

After a moment of silence, I decided that I still have to do what's right. I didn't want to have karma bite me in my back side. I told her that if we're really meant to be together then we're meant to be anyway. And as much as I want to be with her, the moment is just not right... As I said that, it felt like the very ground I was standing on was going to collapse. My hands were shaking ... My lips were numb ... My head was a blur ... Tears were swelling in my eyes ... And before any tears comes visibly streaming out of my eyes I decided to rush to my car as soon as possible.

It's been two months now and I haven't spoken to either Miranda nor my best friend. I just don't want to talk to any of them right now because I'm not sure if my heart can take it. To this day, there has not been a day that I haven't thought about her... Honestly speaking, I'm still very much in love with her...

I still have to see how the story ends...



Must-eat: Bubba Gump

Location: Greenbelt 3, Makati City, Metro Manila

Bubba Gump may be a tad pricey compared to your usual 'Jollibee' or 'Mang Inasal', but it's definitely worth it! What's actually amusing about this restaurant is that they have these metallic plates called "Run Forrest Run" in blue and "Stop Forrest Stop" in red. If you put the red plate up, a waiter or waitress will almost immediately come to your table to serve you - very creative indeed.

The interior deco of the restaurant is quite amusing in all its "Forrest Gump" glory, and the balcony certainly gives you a great outdoor dining experience. What else can a "Balikbayan" ask for right?

I can honestly say that the food in Bubba Gump is first-rate. Here's a little known fact: the exact name of the restaurant is actually "Bubba Gump Shrimp Company," but what most people don't realize though is that Bubba Gump is more than just shrimps; it also has great steaks and desserts as well. You just have to keep in mind that the portions are massive - each item on the menu is actually big enough to be shared between 3 to 4 people so you should order lightly.

When we ate there last year, we were treated to a delectable teaser to begin with, starting off with the "Shrimp Popcorn," which certainly gives a whole new meaning to the term popcorn. WARNING: It's absolutely addictive. Once you start snacking on those, it's almost impossible to stop! And those dips that go along with it are equally to die for as well.

Our main meal consisted of the mouth-watering "Bucket of Boat Trash" and "Forrest's Shrimpers Net-Catch." We also ordered the "Deep fried Colamari Rings" - served in a bed of lettuce alongside its equally superb "far out dip." I personally ordered the "Dixie Style Baby Back Ribs," and it's without doubt a piece of paradise - the ribs were very tender and succulent. I also ordered the 'mahi-mahi' which wasn't that bad either.

For dessert we ordered the "chewy chocolate chip" and the "Alabama mud pie". I can't even remember the last time I felt so full and bloated from such delicious food!

All in all, it was definitely a great dining experience; I highly recommend it to all the Balikbayan's thinking of visiting Philippines in the near future.



Must-visit: Robot lounge



7921 Makati Avenue, Makati City
open from Tuesdays to Saturdays from 5 pm to 2 am



Wasabi bar may have been sizzling 'hot' back in its heyday - but then Robot bar is the future!

A new restaurant and lounge is now standing where the former Wasabi restaurant bar used to stand, and it's none other than 'Robot Restaurant and Lounge.'

One word springs to mind from the moment you step into this joint - 'Futuristic.'

If you are looking for a place to party or just chill out on a Friday or a Saturday night then look no further - Robot is the place to be.

Robot Restaurant and Lounge radiates elegance and sophistication. The first thing that will catch your eye the moment you arrive at its doorstep is its futuristic appeal - files with racks, glass tables, leather seats, chrome bars and awesome lighting effects are just some of its features. And don't get me started on the mirror-tiled toilet - these toilets are so impressive that you'd want to stay and have a drink there for the rest of the night!

Besides its glamorous ambience, Robot also offers a mouth-watering menu that is not to be missed. Robot's South American inspired sushi menu is to die for, especially the spicy tuna sushi roll and the tenderloin steak is simply out of this world. Robot also offers this breezy drink called the 'Lady Gaga,' which is a cocktail that is made up of egg whites and amaretto sour.

All in all, if you're looking for a 'cool' and elegant place to chill out on with a killer ambience and killer food then look no further - Robot is the place to be!

By: Mike Ilagan

Starting your own business is never easy, it takes time, money, effort and most of all – perseverance! If you are currently considering starting up your own business, here's the top 5 things you need to look into before taking the big leap.

Top 5 things to consider when starting a business

1. Put together a business plan

The sad fact is that most businesses don't actually make it past the first year because they have poor cash planning, inadequate market research and most of all, they don't have a proper business plan. The very first thing you should do before starting a business is create a business plan. That business plan should highlight where you want to be in the next 5-10 years and should also highlight your goals as well as provide details on how you will achieve these goals. Nobody else has to see it; this is your own personal guide on how you will grow your business.

2. Will you be providing a product or service?

Of course, if you're planning to start a business you should already know if you will be offering a service or selling a product to the consumer. Most budding entrepreneurs start a business based on their knowledge and expertise on a specific industry sector, others start a business based on something they've always been passionate about and some start a business because they can see a 'hole' in the market which they want to infiltrate. Keep in mind that once you've decided on what business you'll be starting you then have to determine what would make your business different? Will you be offering a cheaper product or a faster service? What would make your product or service better than the competition? What's unique about your business that others would pay attention?

3. What will be your business structure?

There are actually a number of choices to choose from when it comes to business structure, the most common ones though are sole trader, partnership and limited company. The typical choice by most people is the sole trader business structure because it's the structure with the least hassle. In saying that though, this business structure can actually affect your personal security. If you're wondering what the best choice is, well here's a brief description on the 3 business structures: As a sole trader you carry all the risk – which means that if something goes wrong in your business then you are personally liable for all the costs. If you are thinking of entering a partnership structure with a bunch of friends, keep in mind that things could all change at some point due to the demand in the business and it could possibly ruin your friendship. Now if you are thinking of setting up a limited company, yes you may lessen your individual liability, however, it's not cheap to maintain a limited company structure because you'd have to pay a yearly government fee – and this will be tough on you especially if you won't be making any money yet in the next 3 years. If you are seriously thinking of setting up a company for the first time, it's probably best to obtain professional advice from



either a solicitor or accountant so that they can explain the risks and costs involved.

4. What will you name your business?

Finding a name may sound like the easiest part in the process – but think again! Some companies take years before they can come up with a suitable name for their business. Think about it this way, the name of your business will be its brand for life, whatever name you come up with is what you'll be working with for the duration of the business. Here are some questions you should ask yourself: Does the name suit the product or service you are offering? Is the name original? Can you trademark the name? Is the name available online? It's always good practice to register the name of your business to the Fair Trading office straight away to make sure that no one else has the exact same business name as what you have.

5. How are you going to market the new business?

Marketing is a crucial part of any business, without proper marketing your business is as good as dead. The big question is: what approach will you take to reach your specific target market? Do you need to look into magazine ads, billboards, social media or maybe direct mail to reach your target market? Your marketing approach will of course depend on what your product or service is, it's basically trial and error at the start. Just take the plunge and start your marketing efforts and whichever one works for your business is what you should stick on. If you don't know where to start it may be a good idea to find out what your competition is doing, you can always do the same thing but just give it a bit of a twist to make it more favourable for your business.

The mystery that is Rafael Rosell



By: Maeyahn Aguilar

We've seen Rafael Rosell transform before our very eyes. When we say transform, we mean we first saw him as the guy with pearly whites in a Close Up commercial. That time, he just moved here from Norway where he grew up. Years later, he's everywhere – TV, movies, particularly those Bench billboards where he exudes hotness.



But underneath those tantalizing eyes, bewildering smile, and drool-worthy bod is a Kuya. Most people don't know that he's been changing diapers for as long as he could remember. He was a hands-on older brother to Ralph and Russell, and still is. There are no secrets among the three of them. "I share my life lessons with my younger brothers, and they share with me. Together we learn and conquer personal problems."

He may also look and speak like a foreigner, but he is a full-blooded Filipino. His parents are from Cebu and Bicol, and they used to visit every other year for a month or two before Rafael permanently relocated here for his career. He used to speak a little of both dialects. Unfortunately, he forgot these when he hit his teenage years.

Through the years he's been in front of the camera, he has proven his commitment in the craft. He has played a diverse range of characters on the small and big screen – a philandering model aspirant in Bikini Open, a brave and loyal warrior in Rounin, and a conniving, guiltless demon in Maligno. But it was his turn as the jealous boyfriend of a confused woman in Rome and Juliet that garnered him critical acclaim, including an Urian for Best Supporting Actor.

With the independent film making coming in full bloom and considering Rafael can easily shift from mainstream to independent projects, we asked him what are the pros and cons of both. "For me, mainstream is almost always the same here in our business. It's always a love story. There's always a formula. And it's always the same formula! Indies have so much artistic freedom! Which to me, makes it more real, edgier, and most of all, more interesting to watch."

Whatever he's doing, we're definitely tuning in.

2011: The year that was

By: Jenny Aluring

It was the year when Mother Nature put us in our place, justice was both served and not served, billions tuned into one wedding, we said goodbye to an era of space travel and Hollywood just wouldn't behave. To say that 2011 was unpredictable is an understatement. No region in the world was untouched by events that would change them forever, whether it was by Nature's hand or our own.

The greatest example in 2011 of how helpless we are against Nature is the 9.0 earthquake and resulting tsunami in northeast Japan on March 11, 2011. To see whole villages wiped out of existence by a relentless wall of water left the world horrified. Uncertainty, and heroism, followed as Japanese nuclear facilities in the quake zone were damaged and engineers risked their lives to repair them.

North America dealt with everything from blizzards to tornadoes. Early 2011 saw America's northeast and Midwest buried in record snowfalls. Joplin, Missouri was nearly leveled as it was hit by an F-5 tornado on May 22. 157 people were killed, making it the deadliest tornado to hit the US since the 1950's.

2011 was also marked by unprecedented change in the Middle East. It was the year that the people found their voice, and their courage, to rise up against their respective oppressive governments. Facebook and Twitter became invaluable tools that saw the downfall of President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

While these uprisings were relatively peaceful, the one in Libya resulted in bloody civil war. President Moammar Gadhafi has had his country in a vice-like grip of fear since 1969. Public hangings, prison massacres and torture were rampant during his reign. After the ousting of President Mubarak, rebel forces in Libya decided that now was the time to act. For 6 months, they fought against Gadhafi's military and in August, they captured Tripoli, the capital city. It all ended on October 20 when Gadhafi was killed.

Just as September 11, 2001 is forever etched in the hearts and minds of the American people, on May 1, 2011, they added another date. On that day, at 11:35pm, President Barack Obama announced that Osama bin Laden, the orchestrator of that awful tragedy and head of Al Qaeda, has been killed. People descended outside the White House and in Times Square as impromptu celebrations broke out all over the country. Long awaited justice was dealt at last. It made the 10-year anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy 4 months later just that little bit easier.

Two of the top stories of 2011 played out in the courtroom. First was the Casey Anthony trial and the second was of Michael Jackson's physician, Dr. Conrad Murray. Casey Anthony stood accused for the murder of her 2-year old daughter, Caylee. Indeed, her guilt seemed a foregone conclusion - her failure to report her daughter missing for 30 days, surveillance videos capturing her going about her daily business, even partying during the time that her daughter was missing, that her car allegedly smelled of a rotting corpse, and more - but the lack of hard, forensic evidence saw her acquitted. To many, justice was not served that day.

Dr. Conrad Murray was not so lucky. He was convicted of involuntary manslaughter in November 2011 after being accused of administering a lethal dose of a powerful anaesthetic that resulted in the death of Michael Jackson. He was then sentenced to 4 years in jail and the loss of his medical licence.

Goodbyes were also said in 2011. The world bid farewell to our current notion of space travel when NASA shut down its long beleaguered space shuttle program. Oprah Winfrey stepped down as America's premier talk show host. Harry Potter and his friends finally graduated, ending a franchise that spanned 10 years, 8 movies and earned nearly \$7 billion. Hollywood icon, Elizabeth Taylor died of congestive heart failure on March 23. Steve Jobs, Apple CEO, lost his battle with pancreatic cancer on October 5, leaving behind a legacy that changed portable technology forever and Amy Winehouse, "an absolute original", as described by Tony Bennett, unfortunately could not escape the demons that plagued her and died of accidental alcohol poisoning on July 23.

On a happier note, 2011 saw the long awaited nuptials of Britain's heir to the throne, Prince William to commoner, Catherine Middleton. After a 10-year courtship, billions of people around the world watched as the couple tied the knot at Westminster Abbey. We all gasped as Kate was finally revealed in her much-anticipated, Sarah Burton-designed wedding gown, raised our eyebrows as younger sister, Pippa, wowed in her figure-hugging dress, marveled at the pageantry and ceremony that came with a royal wedding, cheered when William and Kate shared a kiss on the balcony of Buckingham Palace and cheered again when they shared a second one. In the midst of it all, the world saw a young couple truly in love, promising to share their lives together and the whole world joined in wishing them well.

Well, there you go ... 2011. Where 'surprise' is the catchcry.



Japanese delegation visiting KCL housing

Photos courtesy of Kalatas Newspaper

Canley Vale property



Kapitbahayan Cooperative Limited

A contemporary concept in affordable housing

By: Albert Prias

A thriving and award winning housing cooperative that we can call our own ... Is there really such a thing?

Amazingly there is.

One of the most successful housing cooperatives in New South Wales is actually proudly Filipino and it has been running now for a number of years right under our very noses - will wonders never cease?

'Kapitbahayan Cooperative' limited is a housing cooperative that has been running now for a remarkable 17 years, but since the year 2000, the group behind the Kapitbahayan Cooperative has received several industry awards already. Their awards include 'Excellence in Asset Management (State-wide)', 'Excellence in Community Involvement', 'Excellence in Management Innovation', 'Overall excellence in Cooperative Housing as a volunteer organization', 'Ecological Management Award,' and the Canley Vale Kapitbahayan project has also been awarded with the 'Exceptional Partnership Project Award.'

Kapitbahayan Cooperative limited was originally organized by the Lidcombe Family Support Group back in 1995; it was designed to provide low-cost housing for newly arrived migrants. There was an initial 15 Couples that started the cooperative and they all received full training from an agency connected with the Department of Housing. After they have finished their training and formed a solid structure, they then applied for government funding and have initially elected Ruben Amores as the coordinator - he was eventually elected president later on. The group is composed of a secretary, treasurer, property maintenance officer, internal auditor and there are also other committees such as conflict resolution, etc. The tenants in any Kapitbahayan Cooperative unit are called tenant members - all tenants must apply for a

precoop membership. The members are the sole occupants of the units and they manage the properties themselves. In terms of rent, the rental fee is 25% from an occupant's income and water is free because it is paid for by the cooperative. The tenants have to pay for electricity though except for the electricity used in the common areas. To qualify as a member, you should first be an Australian permanent resident and not an owner of any property or accommodation. 65% of the tenants are in the low income bracket and 35% are from the medium income level bracket. All the tenants enjoy similar facilities and this can be referred to as 'socialized income'. The tenants can stay in the property as long as they want to or until they can afford to buy their own property. A tenant can be evicted due to non-payment or if they are creating problems with other tenants. The coop practices the principle of succession wherein the unit occupancy can be transferred to the next of kin.

Currently the Kapitbahayan Cooperative is housing around 23 families and it has units in Auburn, Berala, Merrylands, Wentworthville as well as Canley Vale. It was a pioneer in putting up affordable housing via the funds garnered from the Cooperative's operation. To date, the group behind the Kapitbahayan Cooperative has helped the Karen Burmese, Somalians, Turkish, Hindus and Sudanese groups to organize their own cooperatives and it is currently negotiating with the Department of Housing and Penrith council on a possible North Penrith project.

So what is the secret behind the success of the Kapitbahayan Cooperative? Simple, according to the current President Ruben Amores "The 'tulungan' concept among Filipinos, the spirit of neighbourhood and the 'bigayan' attitude" are just some of the traditional Filipino values that contribute to its success. Well said Mr Amores, more power to you and the Kapitbahayan Cooperative!



Born to fight



By: Jenny Aluning

It is a rare gift to be able to find something in your life that you passionately love and turn it into a career. Kickboxer, Reinhardt "Bad Ass" Badato has done just that, transforming his love for the sport, he created Full Force Gym. Located within the confines of the Summit Complex in Sydney's West, the gym is dedicated to cultivating the best kickboxing and muay thai champions around. But to Reinhardt, the gym goes much farther than that. He also wants to "help out people get fit, lose weight & most of all to help out many kids to have confidence/ self-esteem & learn self-discipline & also self-defense."

The 35-year old started out with the simple desire to lose weight. A friend of his suggested he try kickboxing. "So I gave it a go & I loved the training..." but as with all intense exercise, the pain the next day was inevitable. "I really felt all the

muscles in my body hurting. I thought to myself...this is gotta be good for me, so no matter how sore I was; I went back the next day & I got my brother to come with me."

It was indicative of the kind of drive Badato will develop for his chosen sport. For his very first World Title fight, he found himself having to train alone when his own trainer "...wasn't really training me the way he should for a fight & actually telling me not to fight..." But Reinhardt had a bigger, more personal reason to do well in the competition. He was planning to propose to his then girlfriend (now his wife and mother to his children) at the end of the fight. "I didn't care if I win or lose, I didn't even care about the World Title. All I wanted was "not to get KO'd" so I can propose to my Girlfriend..." So, with "...nobody guiding me, no help from anyone, except my Brothers..." who were an invaluable source of moral support, Badato put himself through a rigorous training regime, fueled by his determination and faith, "...those were the times were I prayed so much, desperately calling on to Our Lord for

strength within..." And all the hard work was worth it. "In front of the National TV... I won by a "Bad Ass" Knock Out on the 3rd round & I got to propose to Kristine...it felt like a fairy tale that you read to the kids for bedtime stories..."

That would be the first of many titles. As a fighter, Reinhardt gets to travel around the world for different bouts and he enjoys getting to meet other people. But he discovered that not only does he love fighting, he loves training others as well. And that's how Full Force Gym came to life. He took the spare room in the Summit Complex and in 9 years transformed it into a place that not only cultivated champion fighters like his two brothers, 25-year old Michael and 29-year old Van, but into a place where anyone who wanted to learn is welcomed into a family.

But with all success, there are the disadvantages. Reinhardt sometimes has training sessions from "6am every hour till 11pm!" which means that he sacrifices precious time with his

family. "...I don't even get home to have dinner with my family anymore...it's been like this for the past 9yrs. But its ok, I still get to have quality time with my wife & kids on other times..."

One of the experiences that made all the sacrifices worth it was when Reinhardt became Personal Trainer to Boyz II Men while they were on their Australian tour in 2005 and on their New Zealand tour in 2007. "With all the success they've had, they are still humble & genuine....I'm so proud to say that we are their friends..."

While their parents were initially reluctant to stand beside their sons in their chosen profession (the younger Badato brothers had to be creative in hiding their black eyes and bruises, even going so far as gathering their neighbourhood's newspapers to hide the news of their achievements!), they now wholeheartedly support them. Which is a good thing as Reinhardt is "...not getting out of this industry, even though it doesn't pay as much as others... this is the best job in the world!" He plans on continuing being a mentor to future champions. He gives this valuable advice: "If you really want something real bad- no circumstances/ no excuse/ If you really put your mind to it/ you give everything you got & you add a lot of prayers/bring God in the midst of it... then there are no stopping you. You can be who you want to be. It may be a long journey to get there, but the journey is what will develop you to be that person that you want to be..."

I survived a life threatening illness

Six years ago I was diagnosed with a life threatening illness ... And my world was never the same again.

Here's my story

Back then when I used to live in the Philippines, my life was surrounded with materialism and ambition. Just like any mother who wanted to provide for her family, I actually worked so hard that I was juggling two jobs. My husband was also always away working in the field so we rarely saw each other. We still religiously went to church every Sunday and we also went on holidays together with the kids, but we never had time to actually serve God.

That's why I consider our big move in Australia back in 1992 such a blessing in disguise. Our arrival here in Australia led us to joining the Couple's for Christ community here in Sydney and we've never been happier. This community has taught us a lot, since joining Couples for Christ I have developed a personal and loving relationship with God and I've also discovered the joy in serving God as well as my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Everything was going really well in both our spiritual and personal lives, when shocking news suddenly struck my family. I was diagnosed with a serious ovarian tumor back in August 2006 and I needed to



By: Vicky Ilagan



undergo a major operation. My condition had so many complications that my ovarian tumor became a life threatening illness. I could not accept my condition. I was serving God so much ... How can I be diagnosed with such an illness??

The first thing I did when I heard the news was turn to my faith. I realized that God is the only one that I can really count on in these times of need. So I prayed and prayed ... And prayed some more. I figured that only God can help me now

After a risky operation and four seemingly long months of rest and recuperation - I surprisingly returned to good health. God has answered my prayers, I was healed. It was a miracle!

Looking back over the years, I could honestly say that this specific experience has taught me a lot about life. I have seen first-hand the love of my husband, two kids, relatives and friends who have proven their love, commitment and faithfulness towards me when I needed them the most. I have realized that life is short so we should always enjoy and live our lives to the fullest and use our maximum potential to serve God and other people. And I have also realized that God will never leave you - no matter what. His love is eternal and everlasting.

I've also realized that we are all just temporary residents here on Earth; our final place is in fact in heaven with our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

It has been a truly life changing and harrowing experience for me Now I am running my race for God.

People and Faces

1. Fun times at the Basement Blacktown

2. Tom Baena at the 'UGNAYAN' meeting last March 4

3. Out and about with Angel, Sheila and Rommel

4. Congratulations to Cen Amores - People's ambassador of Australia

5. Hot Mammams at their anniversary function at Auburn RSL

6. A very happy birthday with Val and friends

7. Darryl O'Brien from the Kalatas newspaper



Hot Mammams



Val and Friends



Cen Amores



Basement Blacktown



Tom Baena



Angel, Sheila and Rommel



Darryl O'Brien

"Get to know who's who in the social scene Down Under"

People and Faces

1. Crowd shots by Darryl O'Brien from the Kalatas newspaper

2. Bernadette Manthey and her daughter

3. A fun night out with the Flagcom crew

4. Albert Prias and Rod Dingle at the 'UG-NAYAN' meeting last March 4

5. Vee and her friend on a night out

6. Stephanie Rose - Miss Philippines Australia 2011 with a friend

7. A guest at an APN function



5

Vee and a friend



4

Albert Prias and Rod Dingle



6

Stephanie Rose



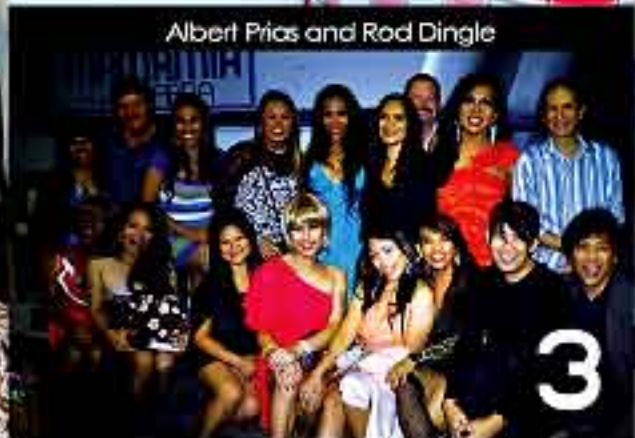
1

Photography by Darryl O'Brien



2

Bernadette Manthey



3

Flagcom night out



7

APN function

"Get to know who's who in the social scene Down Under"



The Filipino Community CentreA dream or a nightmare?

By: Albert Prias

On the 4th of March, The Philippine Community Council (PCC) invited various members from the Filipino community to a public meeting called 'UGNAYAN' to discuss the issues surrounding the very controversial Filipino Community Centre. I personally went there hoping to get an update on its current status and hoping to finally put to rest the controversies surrounding it. A number of community group leaders also turned up at the meeting including veteran lawyers such as councillor Jess Diaz, but guess what? NO ONE from the committee of the Filipino Community Centre even came to the meeting to face the community and address the issues surrounding it.

Needless to say, we were all EXTREMELY disappointed.

I have been active in the Filipino community for the past 7 years and what do I really know about the Filipino Community Centre? To be honest I don't really know the exact facts, but from what I heard from the grapevine and read from various Filipino publications it all started 20 years ago. Back then, a group of like minded Filipinos decided to collect money from the Filipino community for the purpose of building a Filipino Community Centre. Don't quote me on this, but apparently they were able to raise more than a million dollars to build the centre. This large sum was made up of government funding, a variety of donations and money raised from various fund raising events hosted by several community organizations. Initially, the group behind the community centre was able to purchase a property in Rooley Hill, but for some reason, they had to sell that property and purchase a new one in Schofield. Sadly, it turned out that the property that they bought in Schofield this time was not even suitable for the purpose of a



community centre as it was situated in a flood zone area.

Alas, the Filipino centre wasn't fit to be used for its actual purpose. Nonetheless, the property still had to be serviced and maintained. So even though the land was not fully paid, the group behind the centre still had to collect donations and pledges to pay for the mortgage, but now they can't even provide us with an update on The Filipino Community Centre. The community has finally lost faith in the project, so now who will continue to pay the bills and maintain the property then?

Going back to the 'UGNAYAN' meeting last March 4, because no one came to account for the Filipino Community Centre, some people have suggested that the community take the committee behind the Filipino Community Centre to court, but my question is: Do we really need to go this far?

The Filipino Community Centre was indeed a noble dream, but now it's turning out to be an awful NIGHTMARE.

The community has now lost faith in the Filipino Community Centre. A dedicated group has even been assigned to dig deeper into this project. But then how much time will it really take to dig something out? Or do we need some sort of people's power to obtain this information? Let's assume that the committee behind the centre has finally decided to share the information that we want, then what?

I now pose this question: Would it be too late to start again from scratch and build a new community centre? I'm not saying that we should forget about the Filipino Community Centre altogether and move on to something bigger, better and with less drama. What I am saying is that, while some of us are still investigating this project then maybe some of us can perhaps continue to chase the dream of putting up a fully functional community centre we can call our own. What we need now is SOMEONE who can lead us in the journey.

ANYONE out there?

Cheap Bites: Chat Thai



Location: 20 Campbell Street, Haymarket

So how can I best describe my Chat Thai experience?

I would say quality food, efficient service and affordable prices.

When I went there with a group of friends a few weeks ago, the place was so busy that we probably waited for around fifteen minutes before they found a table for us. But don't worry though, they serve food really fast in Chat Thai

so you won't have to wait for too long for a meal. It actually took just around five minutes for our orders to arrive which was good because we were starving!

I can honestly say that this place has authentic Thai food, I'm impressed because a lot of the Thai restaurants in Sydney have actually watered down the spiciness in their meals to cater for the Australian crowd. My Chat Thai favourites would have to be the Chicken Pad Thai and fresh spring rolls which were both to die for. You should also try the sweet and succulent Goong Ob Woon Sen (Baked king prawns in clear noodles), Satay Chicken, stir fried crisp pork belly, wild ginger in red curry paste, grilled pork skewers and prawn cakes which were all equally delicious.

The dessert menu was also quite memorable. My favourites would have to be the Black and Pandan flavoured sticky rice, but you should definitely also try the Mango and Durian flavoured sticky rice, ice bread and sweetened coconut milk which were all quite mouth watering and tasty.

If you're looking for a nice classy place with affordable street food prices then you should definitely pay a visit to Chat Thai - there might be a small queue to begin with but it's well worth the wait!

Recipe: Crabs - "Labong" in Coco Milk



(Recipe by Marx Canoy, edited by Michelle Baltazar)

Excerpt from the book: Marx Canoy- Traditional to World-Class Philippine Cuisine available in June 2012.

INGREDIENTS

4 whole crabs
200g fresh bamboo shoots (thinly sliced, diced)
1 red pepper bell (diced)
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 brown onion (diced)
2 cloves garlic

20g ginger (finely sliced)
1 bay leaf
30ml fish sauce
500ml coconut cream
Touch of tabasco sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Clean the crab and slice into halves. Preheat oil into deep saucepan and sweat the onion, ginger and garlic. Add the bamboo shoots (sliced into thin dices). Simmer in low heat until soft but without browning the vegetables.

2. Place the crabs and pour the coconut, fish sauce, bay leaf and pepper bell. Bring to boil until the crab is cooked.

3. Adjust the taste by adding tabasco, salt and pepper. Serve with steamed rice.

BREAKOUT BOX

What does dice mean in cooking?

To dice means to cut into small pieces, slices of about a quarter inch or less.

Tip: In the Philippines, chefs can use male or female crabs and many Filipinos love the use of female crabs in cooking, specially the ones with eggs. In Australia, chefs only use male crabs. Female crabs, particularly ones with eggs, are not allowed.

Cheap Bites: Pho Pasteur



Location: 137 Church Street, Parramatta

If you happen to be around the Parramatta area, on a tight budget and feeling the pangs of hunger, then I would highly recommend

that you pay a visit to Pho Pasteur. It's not a high end restaurant so you don't have to dress to impress, casual attire is fine. The presentation of the food is pretty simple but the meals are authentic, fresh and most importantly - cheap! My favourites would have to be the special beef noodle soup, fried pork chop with tomato rice and crispy chicken. I also highly recommend the avocado shake, it's thick and quite tasty and definitely out of this world. There's actually two Pho Pasteur restaurants in Parramatta if you don't know, one is located in Westfield shopping centre right under Event cinemas and the other one is located in Church Street. Both restaurants are equally affordable and serve delicious food but I prefer the Pho Pasteur in Church Street though because I personally think they serve more authentic food.

Sweet Eats: PassionFlower



Location: 580 George Street, Sydney

If you have a sweet tooth and you are always looking for a nice, quaint place to have dessert, then you should pay a visit to PassionFlower. Their menu actually looks really attractive, the desserts are creatively

presented and very tempting to look at. **WARNING:** It is a tad pricey to eat in this joint so don't be shocked when you run through their menu list and find out how expensive the dishes are. Here's an example: a tiny crepe with a bit of fruit actually costs around \$18 and the average price of any dessert would be around the \$14 mark. In saying that, my favourites would have to be the Green tea, Rose petal, Black sesame and Lychee ice cream. It's also worth trying the Strawberry Fondue and Hokay pokey ice cream. Now if you're planning on paying a visit to PassionFlower soon, it's best that you actually just share a dish with a friend. Their dishes maybe pretty to look at - but the prices are pretty heavy on the wallet as well! Overall, the venue also looks quite modern and bright but the service needs a bit of improvement though.

Flagcom Un-Masque



By: Charles Chan

It may have been a murky day on the 25th February 2012, but even this was not going to spoil the excitement and the fanfare that was about to transpire at the Petersham RSL. At about 5 o'clock pm, the 13 finalists for the Mardi Gras Queen of the Night 2012 Search started arriving one by one and suddenly Petersham RSL was engulfed in feathers, wings, headdresses and more feathers being carried by the candidates as they prepare to battle it out to take the crown.

People started arriving around 7:15pm and by exactly 8:05pm the host of the night; Miss Christine Samuel took to centre stage to open the night's festivities.

There were 5 sets overall, the candidates first appeared in their Pink Flagcom t-shirts and introduced themselves one by one. The second set made the audience explode in thunderous applause as the candidates appeared in their sultry Swimsuit Competition. The Naughty Competition was another crowd favourite as the candidates came out dressed in their sexy and extremely mischievous outfits that push the boundaries of fantasies. The second last set saw our candidates in their evening gowns which was just sheer elegance. The Mardi Costume was the last segment of the competition and the audience came alive to see the candidates off one last time.

The performers of the night are also worth mentioning. The singing prowess of Sidney, Annie and Princess as well as the enjoyable Bollywood dance performance by the Trikone Group definitely energized the crowd. Jonas Jost's magic act also kept the crowd entertained along with Brian Lorenz's dance performance

with his team of Dancing Instructors. Moreover, the Maharlika Dance Group and the Mindanao Ethnic Group were the Finale performance of the night.

The winners were announced shortly after 11:30 pm. Although the competition was tough, the night belonged to Danni Myers of Potts Point, NSW who took the coveted title. The other winners were Leila Lopez of Brisbane, Queensland as the Rainbow Princess and Chato Fujii of Tokyo, Japan as the Pink Triangle Princess. All in all, it was a fun and interesting night!



The InLife Guide

Your guide to what's going on around town

Adhika

What: 'ADHIKA' - a dinner/dance to celebrate the 30 years of Filipino Media's service organized by Radio Kawayan, Radio Dalisay and Radio Sandigan
Where: Burwood RSL, 96 Shaftesbury rd, Burwood
When: March 25, 5-10pm
Contact person: Josie 0432 372 915

WOW Blacktown

What: WOW Blacktown - Multicultural Fiesta organized by AFBWCI
Where: Rooty hill high school, North Parade, Rooty hill
When: April 21 & April 28, 10am - 5:30pm
Contact person: Raquel 0401 678 188

Neria Soliman

What: Neria Soliman LIVE - political campaign, dinner/dance at the Pabico restaurant
Where: Pabico restaurant, Mt Druitt
When: April 22, 6-10pm
Contact person: Albert 0402 533 587

APCO Inc

What: APCO Inc - Independence Day Celebration
Where: Bankstown Sports Club, 8 Green Field parade, Bankstown
When: June 9, 7 - 11pm
Contact person: Albert 0402 533 587

PCC Independence Day

What: PCC Independence Day Celebration
Where: Rouse hill Gardens, Rouse hill
When: June 12, 7 - 11pm
Contact person: Atoy 02 9831 4590

Your thoughts...

Fake Filipinos

I don't get how some Filipinos are somehow unable to speak Tagalog anymore even though they've only been in Australia for around 2 years? SERIOUSLY?? I've been in Australia for 20 years and I can still speak the language fluently! Of course, I can also speak the English language fluently as well, but I don't get why some Filipinos feel the need to deny being able to speak their native language? I actually think it's an advantage for anyone to have a second language whilst living in a foreign soil. To the Filipinos out there pretending not to know how to speak Tagalog anymore just because they now reside in Australia - GET REAL please!

Mark, Auburn NSW

Filipino Crab Mentality

I've just started my own business here in Australia and I've heard from various friends already that some people are talking rubbish behind my back. Apparently some other Filipinos offering the same products similar to what I'm selling have been spreading some nasty rumours about me. Huh?? Why do other Filipinos feel the need to bring other Filipinos down?? I don't talk hogwash about anyone, why do other Filipinos want to talk hogwash about me and try and bring down my new business? I've barely just started for goodness sake! This is Australia people! If Crab mentality is rampant among Filipinos living in the Philippines, then please just leave that sort of mentality back there. If we see our other kababayans trying to make a name of themselves overseas then I think it is only fair that we offer our support to them instead of trying to bring them down. I mean, at the end of the day shouldn't we Filipinos all stick together and help each other out? I believe that a success of one is a success of all.

Mildred, Quakers Hill NSW

Tagalog or Filipino??

I recently had a small debate with a friend of mine regarding the Filipino language, now would you tell other Filipinos that you speak 'Tagalog' or speak 'Filipino'? The politically correct Filipinos would automatically say that 'Tagalog' is the right term, but I've been living in Australia for more than 10

years now and I always say I know how to speak 'Filipino' - I guess this is the 'Australianised' way of saying it here down under. Well Tagalog or Filipino, I think it's the same thing anyway. As long as you can say you're a Filipino at heart then that's all that matters.

Susan, Ryde NSW

How would you react to an insult?

If an Australian or some other person from a different background insulted you or teased you about being Filipino - how would you react? I believe there are 3 types of Filipinos that would normally respond to an unwanted insult. The first one is the 'katipunero /katipunera,' as the word suggests these are the types of Filipinos that are extremely aggressive and will respond back with an equally hurtful insult, they have the 'Filipino pride chicken' and they will go at any lengths to fight back whether it is physical or verbal. There are also the 'Maria Clara' Filipinos, these are the type of Filipinos who actually just soaks up the insult, and they will not strike back because they don't like the trouble. Then there's what I would refer to as the 'Richard Goma', they are Filipinos who are poised, confident and so sure of themselves that if they hear an insult they will probably just laugh it off and respond with a sarcastic comment as opposed to shouting back with an equally hurtful verbal insult. They are self-confident and they feel that they don't need to go down the other person's level. So there you go folks, the three very different types of Filipinos that respond to a verbal insult, now which Filipino are you?

Bagets, Hurstville NSW

I HATE strong perfume!

I wish some people would just stop spraying strong perfume during work hours. Don't they know that strong perfumes give most people headaches?? A couple of sprays should be enough; you don't need to shower yourself with perfume all over. A workplace is NOT a party place or a social gathering so enough with the strong perfume please!

Sen, Blacktown NSW



Island FOOD FEAST

Traditional To World-Class Philippine Cuisine

Greetings...

Dear Graeme, thank you for the support that you continuously give me; I can't express how much I appreciate it. God Bless you!

Sincerely, Alko

Congratulations to pangga Victor Valdez, Australia finally grant him a visa to stay. I hope he doesn't change.

Love, Mhel

Dear Baba, advanced happy birthday for June 19, it's going to be a special day for you and it is a special day because of YOU. I wish you many more birthdays to come - love you more.

Charles Chan

Daghang salamat my dear pangga (Melle Connely) for being with me no matter what. Let our love and support for each other be lasting and with God's will - forever.

Your loving hubby, Victor Valdez

Congratulations to Ate Cen Amores for being voted the Woman of the Year as well as People's Ambassador of Australia! Congratulations to Kuya Ruben and the Kapitbahayan Group as well for the numerous awards that you've received recently.

More power from FLAGCOM



Coming soon...