

# People and Events

## Veterans Center Association in LA inducts its new officers

**T**HE Induction of New Officers of the Veterans Center Association affiliated to the Filipino Veterans Foundation, was held at the St. Barnabas Senior Center in Los Angeles, on the 67th Anniversary of WWII in the Philippines.

On December 8, 1941, a few hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, 67 years ago, the few remaining Filipino WWII Veterans who were called upon to fight for Old Glory are still around remembering and honoring their fallen comrades in the battlefield and the recent passings due to ravages of old age.

Dr. Jenny Batongmalaque, Executive Director of the Filipino Veterans Foundation on her opening speech alluded to the three significant events that brought this program together. The first is marking the 67th anniversary of WWII in the Philippines and "we are amazed to see the surviving Filipino WWII Veterans in our midst still waiting for Congress to recognize their services and meet truth and justice in the passage of the Equity Bill." The second is the Induction of the new set of officers to prove itself that they can gather, organize and plan to strategically reach out particularly to the 60 plus new members of the 111th Congress and make them aware of their presence and their cause. Lastly, "we are saying adieu to the recent passing of one of its best advocates, Ed Baton, my beloved brother, who died on November 24." He was the Administrator of the Filipino Veterans Foundation in 2002-2006, at the Patriotic Hall.

Consul General Mary Jo Bernardo Aragon was the Keynote Speaker who highlighted the common history of the Filipino and American soldiers in WWII and "we cannot ignore the recognition of services of the Filipino WWII Veterans." She encouraged the assembly to continue its efforts to push for equity in the forthcoming Congress. She announced extending an outreach service center for Filipino American Veterans who are seeking consular services where they congregate and is ready to assist the Veterans in any way they can.

She introduced Deputy Consul General Dan Espiritu as the head of Veterans Affairs at the Philippine Consulate. She also introduced Eric Sierra as the Information Officer.

Alberto Alpasan represented the CA Regional VA based at the Federal Building in West Los Angeles. He started working for the VA at the US Embassy in Manila in 2000-2004 as an adjudicator to claims until he immigrated to the States. Today he holds the position of adjudicator of API Veterans and has

provided outreach assistance to Filipino WWII Veterans in the auspices of the Filipino Veterans Foundation. He has given hope to the Veterans, "never give up because we have come a long way."

The year 2008 has been remarkable for the many Filipino Veterans receiving benefits from their claims, regardless the slowness of the Act of Congress. As long as they qualify, the VA is very cognizant of their plight and advanced years, and their claims for benefits are expedited."

George Dixon, the Inducting Officer, represented the Veterans Service Office of the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs of the County of Los Angeles, headed by Col. Joseph Smith. He knew most of the Veterans present, helping them in their claims being processed.

The newly inducted Officers of the Veterans Center Association, years 2008-2010 were namely, Commander, Ramon Lladoc; Vice-Commander, Santiago Saigo; Adjutant, Loreto Marquez; Finance Officer, Jose C. Reyes; Auditor, Vicente Palad; Judge Advocate, Moises Jose; Marshall, Rodrigo Ramos; Services Officers: Miguel Narzabal and Gliceria Prejillana; Auxiliary Chair, Rosario Romasanta. Absent were Chaplain, Teogines Esternon and Service Officer, Jose Torio. The new Commander, Ramon Lladoc had one message in his acceptance speech. He will tell Congress to "Remove the word "not" from the Rescission Act of 1946, and to recognize our services!"

Dr. Martha Spinks, outgoing Director of the St. Barnabas Senior Center welcomed the Assembly, and she introduced the incoming Director, Mr. Rigo, who was impressed with the program and encouraged the Veterans to hold their events at the St. Barnabas, whose mission is to serve the Seniors in Central Los Angeles.

Mayor Jim Dear, who caught up at the end of the program, presented the Filipino Veterans Foundation and the Batongmalaque family, a certificate of appreciation to Ed Baton, for a job well done, establishing the monthly Food Bank Distribution at the Patriotic Hall and currently held at the Lake Street Park, and facilitation the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder group sessions especially for Filipino WWII Veterans at the Filipino Veterans Foundation Center with the cooperation of the VA Mental Health Center at Temple. These sessions are held weekly at the auspices of the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs in the County of Los Angeles, in the DPSS Building at 2615 So. Grand in Downtown Los Angeles. ■



December 8, 2008 at the St. Barnabas Senior Center Hall: Seated, L-R: Deputy CG, Dan Espiritu; CADVA Regional, Al Alpasan; St. Barnabas Director, Dr. Martha Spinks, Consul Gen. Mary Jo Bernardo-Aragon; VFV Exec. Director, Dr. Jenny Batongmalaque, L.A. County VA Service Officer, George Dixon, the Inducting Officer. Standing: L-R: Former Cmmdr of VCA, Roger Dagdag, Gliceria Prejillana, Miguel Narzabal, Santiago Saigo, Loreto Marquez, Cmmdr. Ramon Lladoc, Jose C. Reyes, Vicente Palad, Rodrigo Ramos, Moises Jose, and Rosario Romasanta.



Mayor Jim Dear of Carson presenting a posthumous certificate of appreciation for Ed Baton, Received by Dr. Jenny. To his right is Linda Organo, the current administrator of the VFV, and to Dr. Jenny's left is Veteran Ligaya Felix and her daughter Merceditas.

## Mayor Villaraigosa encourages Angelenos to take advantage of extended public transportation holiday hours

*Free Late Night DASH service; extended Metro Red Line hours until New Year's Eve*

**L**OS ANGELES—Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa encourages Angelenos to take advantage of the extended public transportation holiday hours offered by Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and Metro during the holiday season weekends.

"Thanks to a unique public-private partnership, Angelenos have the option to celebrate the holidays safely," Mayor Villaraigosa said.

"I hope this convenient, reliable holiday service will give residents a chance to explore Downtown Los Angeles during these upcoming holiday weekends."

The LADOT operates a nighttime DASH bus route to serve Downtown Los Angeles during the 2008 holiday period. The new Late Night DASH route will serve riders on Friday and Saturday nights from 6:30pm to 3am, through and including

New Year's Eve, which falls on a Wednesday night. The special holiday Late Night DASH service also offers riders the ability to connect to Metro's Red Line, which is also operating late night holiday hours until 3am on Friday and Saturday nights.

Metro will operate two-car trains with 20-minute service Friday and Saturday nights on the Metro Red Line only. Operating hours for other Metro lines, including the Metro Purple Line,

will not change.

The Late Night DASH route and extended Metro Red Line hours are the direct result of a private/public partnership with Downtown merchants and individuals, who raised the money for LADOT and Metro to operate the service.

"This partnership benefits everyone living, working or visiting downtown Los Angeles during the busy holiday season," Robinson said.

"Having public transportation available late into the night will allow activities to flourish in Downtown."

Partnershipsponsorsinclude STAPLES Center; LA LIVE; Bringing Back Broadway; The Orpheum Theatre; 213 Inc.; Broadway Bar; Casey's Irish Bar & Grill; Cole's Original French Dip; Golden Golpher; Seven Grand; The Association; Astani Enterprises; Barry Shy; blogdowntown.com; Brookfield Properties; City Loft Square; The Los Angeles Theatre; Club Nokia; NBC Universal; Historic Downtown BID; J Restaurant and Lounge; Los Angeles City Councilmembers Wendy Greuel and Jan Perry; Los Angeles

Theatre; Millennium Partners/ Argent Ventures; MerueloMadux; Music Center, Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County; Pacific Electric Lofts; Patina Restaurant Group; Pete's Café; Pitfire Pizza Company; Redwood Bar & Grill; La Cita; Selma Hotel; Deluxe Restaurant - Adolfo Suaya; Newport Capital Advisors; Fox Theater and the Ivar - 6506 Hollywood Associates; L.T. Properties - Dr. Alan Konce and Vytas Jusys; the Pantages Theatre; and the Office of Council President Eric Garcetti.

For further information about the Late Night DASH or other LADOT transit services, call (213, 310, 323, 818) 808-2273, Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM until 7:00 PM or visit the LADOT transit website at [www.ladottransit.com](http://www.ladottransit.com). For LADOT information, visit [www.ladot.lacity.org](http://www.ladot.lacity.org).

For additional service alert information, visit [www.metro.net](http://www.metro.net). For transit trip planning assistance over the phone, call 1-800-COMMUTE. ■

## Consular Outreach Program COPAO Center, Dec. 13

**L**OS ANGELES—A team from the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles will be conducting a Consular Outreach Program on Dec. 13 at the Council of the Philippine American Organizations of San Diego County, Inc. (COPAO) Center, 832 "E" Avenue, National City, CA 91950 from 9am to 4pm.

The Consular Outreach Team will accept and process applications for Machine Readable Passport (Cost: \$50) and Re-Acquisition of Philippine Citizenship or Dual Citizenship pursuant to R.A. 9225 (Cost: \$50). For more information, interested applicants may visit the Consulate's website at [www.philippineconsulatela.org](http://www.philippineconsulatela.org).

The Philippine Embassy and Consulate Generals in the US started processing Machine Readable Passports (MRP) on June 2, 2008. The Machine Readable Passports will benefit the Filipinos primarily in terms of document security and integrity and ease of travel. It has superior security features compared to the green passports, which virtually eliminates the possibility of identity theft and acts of fraud.

A machine-readable passport is being issued by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in compliance with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for members, including the Philippines, to issue MRPs not later than 1 April 2010.

Applications received by the Philippine Foreign Service Posts in the US will be sent to the main office in Manila via diplomatic pouch. However, in view of the transit time, it will take six weeks for a passport to be released to the applicants, from the time the application is accepted. Personal appearance for all will be required for data verification, finger-printing and signature capture. Applications by mail will no longer be accepted.

In compliance with the new photo requirements for the MRP, applicants are requested to visit the DFA website at [www.dfa.gov.ph](http://www.dfa.gov.ph). ■

## The President's Commission on White House Fellowships

*Accepting Applications for the 2009-2010 Class*

**W**ASHINGTON, December 1, 2008 - The White House announced today that The President's Commission on White House Fellowships now is accepting applications for the 2009 - 2010 Class of Fellows. Applications are available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows/about/apply.html> and must be submitted electronically by February 1, 2009.

Founded in 1964 by President Lyndon Johnson, the White House Fellows Program is one of America's most prestigious programs for leadership and public service. White House Fellows spend a year working as full-time, paid special assistants to senior White House Staff, Cabinet Secretaries and other top-ranking government officials. Fellows also participate in an education program consisting of roundtable discussions with renowned leaders from the private and public sectors and trips to study US policy in action both domestically and internationally.

The program has fostered a legacy of leadership, with nearly 600 alumni who are respected leaders. Alumni include Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Travelocity CEO Michelle Peluso, and Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert.

Selection as a White House Fellow is highly competitive and based on a record of remarkable professional achievement early in one's career, evidence of leadership potential, a proven commitment to public service, and the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute successfully at the highest levels of the Federal government. Fellowships are awarded on a strictly non-partisan basis.

More information about the program is available at [www.whitehouse.gov/fellows](http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows). ■

## STBA Christmas Party

**T**HE Sto. Tomas, Batangas Association of So. Ca. recently held their successful Christmas Party at St. Paul of the Cross Parish Hall in La Mirada. Fr. Patrick Gannon, the previous Pastor and Fr. Joseph Bisperas, the current Administrator were the guests of honor. There were dancing, karaoke and community singing by Jun & Nemia Ventura, Ariel Carandang, Minnette Manacsa, Ruby Barlolome & Fe Dorado. For more info about the association, please call Dolly Hernandez (626) 810-3173; Willie Manacsa (818) 341-3472; Myrna Jaurigue (909) 594-6684; Rosie Sancianco (951) 898-7628 or Josie Malaiba (626) 969-4880. ■



**EFFREN CHAVEZ PUBLIC RELATIONS OF ROSEMEAD MASONIC LODGE #457 AND ACCEPTED MASON.** Recently he was awarded the Hiram Award the highest award given to a brother of their lodge. This year, he was the recipient of this award. Being a Filipino it was an honor for him and his family that he was given this award. Freemasonry is the oldest fraternity in the world a lot of members were Past President of the United States of America and also in our country including our national heroes' Jose Rizal, Aguinaldo, Juan Luna etc. ■



Bowling Tournament for a cause project of Philippine Medical Association of Southern California Auxiliary in cooperation of PNASC Philippine Nurses Association of Southern California was held at the Del Amo Fashion Mall in Lucky Strike Bowling alley last November 30, 2008. Left to Right: Myrna and Dr. Noni Baculi, Dr. Josecito Babaran and Lucy Babaran-president of PNASC Auxiliary, Dr. Arleen and Vernon Nieva and Divinia Encino with the banner list of sponsors. Photo by Joe Cobilla