

THE FILIPINO SURVIVAL KIT



LIZA LEGASPI

Keeping relationships interesting

known each other for a long time does not mean that you can't explore new things anymore. Life is a journey and an adventure. There is no better way to see or experience new things than with your partner.

- Your husband or your special someone is your best friend. Make him feel like it.
- Make your partner feel special. We sometimes take people for granted because we've known them for a while. Don't. This is a major mistake.
- Get involved. Your husband or partner has his or her own special interests. Learn them!
- After a busy week, make sure that you spend a special day with your partner. Make dinner or go out! The dating does not need to stop. Remember to dress for the occasion too. Treat it like a first date.
- Send them a special note on occasion.
- Surprise them! Make it fun and interesting. Cherish each moment. Remember, one of the

things you can't take back is time. So enjoy it.

• Remember to tell them how much you care about them. It's not cheesy.

I hope the above list helps. Please always remember to keep smiling. Life is good.

Next week's article is dedicated to our precious caregivers. They work hard and they do encounter a lot of problems and, like anyone else, they deal with depression.

For those interested on a topic, please email me at lizlegaspi@yahoo.com. I'll be waiting.

Liza Legaspi is an experienced marketer both in the Philippines and the US. She has been focusing on diversity groups for over 20 years. Liza is currently employed by a well-known Asian advertising agency. She has a wide range of experience in marketing consumer products and services.

The items listed are mere suggestions and no guarantees that it will work for you. The tips provided worked for me and I am not making any promises nor will I be liable for any outcome.

LEADERS' DIGEST

Filipinos are everywhere in America – from the East to the West coast. However, as the second largest Asian American community in America, we still have to empower ourselves to become more visible in the political mainstream. Unknown to us, fellow FilAms are making a difference across the US – as appointed and elected leaders in their respective areas. The Asian Journal Leaders' Digest aims to present to readers these leaders who have made – and continually making a difference for the Filipino American community.

Las Vegas Municipal Judge Cedric A. Kerns



In the 11 years that he has presided over Las Vegas Municipal Court, Department 5, Judge Cedric Kerns has become one of the most highly-rated and well-regarded members of the judicial bench.

In 2000, Judge Kerns was awarded an average adequacy rating of 95 in that year's Judicial Performance Evaluation, and he was recommended for retention by 94 percent of the responding lawyers. In 2007, at the winter conference of the Nevada Judges Association, he was named 2006 Outstanding Judge of the Year for what the NJA said was "his commitment to the judiciary and his work to make the courts more efficient, more responsive to our citizens and more effective in protecting our communities."

Judge Kerns has been twice reelected as Municipal Court Judge for Department 5. He

first won the seat in June of 1997. Prior to being elected to the bench, Judge Kerns was a partner and co-founder of the Law Office of Kerns and Lybarger where he focused on criminal defense and domestic law. While practicing law, he was a member of the Nevada Trial Lawyers Association, the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Lawyer Referral Services.

Judge Kerns, whose mother, Vivienne Parlade-Kerns, hails from Bicol, Philippines, is a member of both the American Judges Association, where he has served as delegate and governor representing the State of Nevada, and the Nevada Judges Association, of which he has served as member of the Board of Directors and 2005 President. He is also a member of the

Judicial Council of the State of Nevada and the Court Funding Commission of the Supreme Court.

Currently, Judge Kerns is presiding Judge over Las Vegas Municipal Court's Habitual Offender Prevention and Education (HOPE) Court. Its mission is to assist habitual offenders by providing alternatives to incarceration that will maximize program involvement and ultimately lead to long-term sobriety and self-sufficiency.

Judge Kerns is married to Rebecca, and the couple has four children (Tiffani, Brittani, Chad and Nicole).

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Pianist Golez debuts at Kalayaan Hall in support of Disaster Relief Fund

FAIR LAWN, NJ—The Filipino-American Association of Fair Lawn, Inc. (FAAFL) in partnership with Friends Indeed, Inc., Laguna & Friends, Inc., and National Federation of Filipino American Associations, Region 1, and in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Philippines in New York, is spearheading a kickoff concert at the Philippine Center Kalayaan Hall, 556 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY to start a Disaster Relief Fund for victims of natural catastrophes in the Philippines. The concert will be on Friday, October 24, 2008, 7:30 to 9 pm.

Steve Parrado, FAAFL president, has announced that the special concert will feature a very talented concert pianist, Rudolf Pelaez Golez who not too long ago earned the title "Garbo sa Sugbu" or "Pride of Cebu" in Classical Music, an award from the province of Cebu. He was also the sole winner of the Chopin piano competition in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Upon learning that the Filipino American community was embarking on the *Handang Tumulong* Disaster Relief Fund drive, he volunteered his time and talent *gratis et amore*. The concert will be his debut in New York City.

The *Handang Tumulong* Disaster Relief Fund is a new program envisioned to have readily available funds for the Philippines in the event of future calamities. The Philippine Consulate General has recently mobilized Filcomm organizations to help the victims of Typhoon Frank last June. The community's response was very positive. Learning from that experience, Nelsie Parrado, former

president of FAAFL, said, "We realized how difficult fund raising becomes when immediate need comes into play. It would be very good if we can have funds available when the need arises in the future. Our goal now should be



to be ever-ready when the call for help comes. The Philippines is always battered by typhoons and other natural catastrophes."

This concert is the community's initial and pro-active response to that call for readiness. "This is only a small beginning of a worthwhile undertaking. Bigger things are in the works" said Nena Kaufman, a charter founding member of Friends Indeed, Inc., and Executive Director of NaFFAA, Inc., Region 1. Dr. Ellice Flores and Nimia Lacedal, pillars of Laguna & Friends, Inc. echoed: "Yes! It is just the tiny beginning and will become big especially if organizations will pitch in. Every little bit helps. We should challenge others to join hands with us and work together to further this cause."

A minimum donation of \$20.00 will be appreciated. For more information, the following can be contacted: Steve Parrado (201) 349-5490, Nelsie Parrado (201) 291-5425, Nena Kaufman (212)

799-1847, or Dr. Ellice Flores (973) 338-1204.

(Advertising Supplement)

Fiancée entitled to green card...

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petition, filed an application to adjust status, but after more than two years from the date the application was filed for adjustment of status, (and while the person was still waiting to have an interview with USCIS), the couple was divorced. The USCIS denied the adjustment of status because of the divorce, and the applicant was put in removal proceedings.

The USCIS argued that a K visa holder was ineligible to adjust status to that of a lawful permanent resident if the marriage ends before the USCIS adjudicates the application for adjustment of status.

However, the Court noted that in this particular case, the USCIS "did nothing about her application [for adjustment of status] for almost two and a half years, and thus she never became a conditional permanent resident and never reached the [final] stage of the process." The Court noted that the issue was whether the alien's divorce after over two years of marriage made her ineligible to adjust to conditional permanent residence.

The Court concluded that it found "nothing in the plain language of Section 245(d) suggesting that an application [for adjustment of status] that was valid when submitted should be automatically invalid when the petitioner's marriage ends by

divorce two years later."

In other words, the Court noted that nothing in the law required "the automatic removal [deportation] of immigrants whose marriages end in divorce while their application for adjustment of status languishes in the agency's file cabinet."

If you entered the US as a K-1 fiancée, got married, filed for adjustment of status, but before being interviewed for conditional resident status got divorced, I would suggest you seek the advice of a reputable attorney, who can analyze your situation and determine if this 9th Circuit case could apply to your situation.

Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different.

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