

COMMUNITY JOURNAL

IMMIGRANT LIVING: 101 AND BEYOND



MONETTE ADEVA MAGLAYA

(A few years ago, I received a call from a Native American gentleman in Northern California. Not comfortable with e-mail, he called to thank me for referencing Squanto, a Native American Indian, in my column which gave a sketchy background on Thanksgiving Day and how it came to be a transcendent tradition that is accepted and celebrated among many cultures and religions. Apparently, he had some Filipino friends and must have gotten hold of a copy of Asian Journal from them. I am reprising parts of that original article here.)

I am beginning to enjoy my decision to tune out of media for the most part. I didn't realize till now that the remote control is my favorite part of TV. It's the modern counterpart of the magic wand. With your puny fingertip, you can zap the thing that can color your day black. One can only endure tiny doses of news of the doom and gloom variety particularly on the economy, without having your day ruined for you and your mood messed up. Lucille Ball is the one bright spot. That's not to say that we should stick our heads in the sand, like ostriches do. It is nearly impossible to be in a bubble. Log on to the net and there is a barrage of news that spill out on your screen, which you can, of course, ignore. Pump your gas and there's a ubiquitous screen dishing out the news.

The upside of tuning out of broadcast media, in particular, is that you have more time to do the things you want to do. You're not putty in the hands of the media agenda. You maintain equanimity. Cool, calm and collected, you still get to appreciate the things

The gift of a grateful heart

"Gratitude is the heart's memory."

— French Proverb

that still work. Best of all, you are able to count your blessings, and if you can and have the resources, figure out ways and do things in private to help those who have been adversely affected by the economic downturn or if you live in Southern California, by the recent firestorms.

But for all the darkness, there is no better time to be thankful than now. How does one appreciate the light if it were not for darkness? Thoreau once said that the darkness reveals the heavenly lights. Nature teaches us. You can take summer warmth for granted until the frost in the dead of winter bites your soul. On a visceral level, how do you appreciate and be grateful for glorious food if you've never known hunger? How do you appreciate and become grateful for pain-free days if you have never felt physical and mental anguish?

This Thanksgiving Day is a good time as any to cultivate the spirit of gratitude for all things and all people that have made our lives worthwhile in the past, those who bless us at the present time and for those we will still meet in the seasons yet to come.

After the first Pilgrims' harvest in 1621, they celebrated the first Thanksgiving Day with prayerful thanks in front of the food they harvested from the soil. They feasted with Native Americans as honored guests. In good and bad times, this tradition has been preserved and has sustained generations of Americans.

This first batch of immigrants was particularly grateful to Squanto, the Native American and former British slave who, not only acted as interpreter but also taught them the ropes on how to live off and with nature,

teaching them how to fish, plant corn and survive the harsh conditions of the frontier. There is strong reason and evidence to believe that without Squanto's help, this pioneering group may not have survived the rigors of living in a harsh environment during those first critical years. So, all hail to Squanto, for the helping hand he gave to the first immigrants. May his spirit live in us all who can help those in dire straits, in thought, word and deed, particularly during these difficult times.

Thanksgiving Day signals a time to forget our petty concerns, tune out of the noise, confusion and melee that try our souls, and take absolute joy in the moment of being alive. And if you consider yourself blessed, on this day you can take quiet, humble joy in realizing you have that rare gift of one thing more—the gift of a grateful heart. Better yet, make it a daily, lifelong habit. It does wonders.

For those of us among the blessed who will sit down around a special meal with friends and family this Thursday, Thanksgiving Day gives crystal-clear meaning and purpose to our endeavors in the face of current problems and the looming challenges still up ahead.

With the gift of a grateful heart, we know THESE TOO SHALL PASS.

Nota Bene: Monette Adeva Maglaya is SVP of Asian Journal Publications, Inc. To ask questions, send feedback and requests as well as to inquire about advertising in any or all of the 6 print editions of Asian Journal in California, Nevada and New York/New Jersey and/or advertising in the Print Edition Online of Asian Journal, e-mail monette.maglaya@asianjournalinc.com THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE SENT FEEDBACK THROUGH THE YEARS.

THE RELUCTANT IMMIGRANTS



MINOTTE RODRIGO CUENCA

I will pay tribute to the American Dream—which, I have realized goes way behind that '70s notion of a nice home, a nice car, competent and affordable education for the children, and a stable job. The American Dream has evolved (or perhaps, has always been) as the promise that in the States, anything is possible.

How awesome is that?

We have seen the 30-something-techie kick up their sneakers and retire early to millions of dollars. Here is where you can venture to buy a house (or two)

The price of my American Dreams

without a down payment (well, not anymore), where you can be rich without working too hard, where you can invest with virtual capital, where you can purchase anything your heart desires on credit (or cash), just like everyone else in your neighborhood.

I find that you can be who you are here. Though I miss my family's Sunday gatherings in Manila, I find that I love to just re-charge in the week-ends, with no obligations to go anywhere. There was a Manila Christmas when I hauled my kids and spent half of Christmas Eve with my in-laws, and then after dinner, with my maternal grandparents. Christmas Day was spent with my paternal grandparents and then dinner with my dad. Oh, yeah, the same schedule for New Year's Eve and Day. Whew!

Here, cultural and religious binds are not so tight. You are

free to explore your own possibilities. You can read, write, and watch anything you like. I dream to put up a co-op provincial artisan bakery when I retire in Tagaytay and I am free to experiment all I want, without feeling guilty about wasting eggs and butter (so expensive in Manila), and no one can discourage me. I dream to go on a cruise and learn how to rock-climb instead of tending to my future grandchildren, before I get arthritis.

Remember, the possibilities are endless, and though I may waste eggs and butter, I am not about to waste my potential now can I?

I want to get a grant so I can send more books to remote Philippine provinces. I want to drive an RV and cross-country with my kids and my husband. I dream to browse bookstores and yarn shops and have the money to buy

Continued on PAGE 10

DEDICATED, EXPERIENCED AND COMPASSIONATE LAWYER

IMMIGRATION

- PERM LABOR CERTIFICATION
- EMPLOYMENT BASED PETITION
- FAMILY-BASED PETITION
- ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS
- GREEN CARD & CITIZENSHIP
- REMOVAL & DEPORTATION DEFENSE
- INDIVIDUAL TAX ID (ITIN) APPLICATION
- WAIVER APPLICATION
- UNCONTESTED DIVORCE

AUTO ACCIDENT



www.crispinlozano.com

LAW OFFICES OF CRISPIN LOZANO

(562) 242-4773 • (562) 461-1355

LOS ANGELES OFFICE
17057 Bellflower Blvd., Suite 205
Bellflower, CA 90706

Crispin C. Lozano graduated Juris Doctor from Western State University in Fullerton California. He is a CPA, a BBA Cum Laude and an active member of the State Bar of California. All legal services are provided by and under the supervision of an active member of the State Bar of California.

START A NEW CAREER. LIVE A BETTER LIFE!

Vocational Nurse

- 14 Month Program
- Extensive NCLEX Licensing Exam Prep
- Job Placement Assistance
- Financial Aid Available if Qualified



Approved by BVNPT and ACCSCCT

CIT COLLEGE

2701 E. Chapman #101, Fullerton, CA 92831

877.329.5100

Space is limited. CALL NOW!!!

Pilipino po tayo! LAW OFFICES OF KENNETH U. REYES, P.C. ATTORNEY-AT-LAW



Kenneth U. Reyes, Esq.

Law Offices of
Kenneth U. Reyes, P.C.
3699 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90010

IMMIGRATION

- US Citizenship
- Green Card
- Marriage Petitions, Realive Petitions
- Employer Petitions, PERM
- Visa
- H-1B Temporary Worker
- Investor's VISA
- Deportation Defense

PERSONAL INJURY

- Serious Auto Accidents
- Rear Enders
- Injuries from defective products
- Serious injuries from premises accidents
- Fractures & brain injuries from accidents

FAMILY LAW

- Divorce
- Property Division
- Child Custody and Visitation
- Child and Spousal Support
- Domestic Violence Restraining Order
- Legal Separation

CIVIL LITIGATION

- Business Disputes
- Real Estate Disputes
- Breach of Contract
- Partnership Dissolution
- Business Dissolution

We Pay Special Attention to Your Case
Call for an Appointment

(213) 388.1611

website: www.kenreyeslaw.com

email: kureyeslaw@aol.com