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LARRY YANG is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center with a master's degree in Law and practices before California State Courts, United States District Courts, the California Appeals for the 9th Circuit and U.S. Bankruptcy Courts.

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Pacman's Lucky Charm

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superstitious when it comes to his fights. Mayor Leonardia shared how Pacquiao's Catholic devotion and superstitious beliefs became instrumental in forging a strong partnership with the mayor. So what brought Manny to the shores of Bacolod City in 2005 and compelled him to create a lasting relationship with Mayor Leonardia? Perhaps, it's the fact that Bacolod is known for being a "relatively friendly city, bearing the nickname City of Smiles." Perhaps, it's the charm of the MassKara Festival, a noted celebration and an annual attraction that gravitates millions of tourists every year to Bacolod City. Or perhaps it's

because Mayor Leonardia has personally invited the pound-for-pound champ to become "Bacolod's adopted son." One thing is certain—Manny was moved and overwhelmed by the warm and eager reception he got from the people of Bacolod. A beautiful, poignant and profound friendship soon entailed after his meaningful encounter with Mayor Leonardia and his townfolk. Soon after, Manny paid the city of smiles another visit and personally asked Mayor Leonardia to hold on to his boxing belt. It was initially unclear to Mayor Leonardia why he was afforded this privilege and he was hesitant in the beginning.

He found out later on that he has become a sort of "lucky charm" for the Pacman. Mayor Leonardia amusedly recalled Manny's reason: "*Simula noong hinawakan ni Mayor ang belt ko, di na naagaw.*" He jokingly reiterated that he was Manny's magnet—affording Manny five victory boxing belts to date. But Manny's friendship with the Mayor of Bacolod City goes beyond superstitious beliefs. There is a symbiotic relationship—one that was forged from trust and from believing in each other's capabilities. Superstitious or not, Mayor Leonardia will continue to be a formidable supporter of the pound-for-pound champ in all his endeavors and will be rooting for our Pinoy pride. (AJPress)

Pacquiao shells out \$200,000 in Biggest Loser competition

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She was trying to shed some extra pounds. "I'm going to kill you Manny," said Gonzalez, jokingly as she was running. Gonzalez was among the 75 contestants in Manny Pacquiao's Biggest Weight Loser Challenge. Each contestant was required to lose 10 percent of his or her weight in three weeks for a cash prize of \$3,000. The biggest weight loser would receive a bonus of \$10,000. Pacquiao started the weight challenge while training to face Oscar de la Hoya. The pound-4-pound king said he did it so people especially those around him know what it feels like to be in his shoes. "Exactly. Exactly," said Pacquiao to the *Asian Journal*. "I want them to feel how hard [it is] to being a boxer and how hard it is to make the weight." Nick Enciso said that it was a grueling challenge. Three weeks

ago, he weighed 150 pounds. He lost seventeen pounds for the challenge. "I don't even call it a challenge. I call it an event," said Enciso. "It was very hard. All I did was exercise, eat grilled chicken, vegetables all the time." Pacquiao's cameraman Levi Gutierrez lost 20 pounds. He said he ran three miles a day, ate healthy and got plenty of rest. But other weren't so fortunate. Mike Quydilla was only one pound away. With sweat pouring down his face after being inside a sauna for an hour, he stood in front of Pacquiao, and stepped on the weight scale. A look of disappointment appeared on his face when Pacquiao shook his head no. He failed to make weight. He became so desperate; he dropped his pants and cupped his privates to see if that would shed the pound. It didn't. "I'm tired. I'm dying," said

Quydilla panting and asking his friends around him to get him for a bite to eat and water. "I needed one more pound [but] that was my second try. I can't make it. I give up." Gonzalez also couldn't cut the weight. She and Quydilla were among the 11 people that were unable to meet the challenge goals. "It's hard," she said. "If you're metabolism can keep up with you then you have an easier time but it's pretty hard." A total of 64 out of the 75 participating in the challenge completed it. Pacquiao estimates his total payout to be over \$220,000. The biggest weight loser was his manager Mike Koncz. The 48-year-old Koncz lost 33-1/2 pounds. He said it's all about putting your mind to it. "It was hard but I wanted to prove to Manny and the rest of the guys that even an old man can do something if you set your mind to it," said Koncz. "Just like what Manny has said if you don't give up, you can accomplish many things and I wanted to prove these guys in our group that if you dedicate yourself and follow a routine you can achieve a lot of things." Pacquiao said that he wants to promote healthy living. Most contestants also said that they realize how hard it is to be a boxer. But most importantly, how essential it is to stay in good shape. (Joseph Pimentel)

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