

RE-UNION

Filipino-American Associations in America

Searching for a kababata from your hometown, a college buddy or a Pinoy colleague? Your search is finally over. The Asian Journal brings you Re:Union, Filipino American Associations in America -- your link to a network of kababayan associations here in the United States. As your Filipino-American community newspaper, the Asian Journal recognizes your need to nourish and maintain ties with the people and the culture you were born with. This is our way of connecting our kababayans to the past, of creating new opportunities for the present and of inspiring you to pay it forward by becoming active members of your association and the FilAm community at large in the future.

Philippine History Group of Los Angeles (PHGLA)

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MEETING Place: Every second Saturday of the month at 9am at the Filipino Library, Suite 208, 1925 Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90026 on Temple Street between Alvarado and Glendale Boulevard, one block south of the Hollywood Freeway. Call (213)484-0818.

Now in our 5th year!

In the latter part of 1994, Victor Nebrida and I were chatting at the Filipino Library in Los Angeles where we work as volunteers. Since we happened to be board members of the umbrella organization (Pamana) that ran the library, we were thinking of things that we could do to make the library a more effective means in the dissemination of information about the Philippines to the local community.

After much thought, we decided that we would start a Philippine history discussion group. We figured that even if nobody showed up, the two of us could continue our regular discussions of Philippine history, anyway. We had nothing to lose. We put out a notice and called on people to let them know about our plans. We were mildly surprised that about a dozen people showed up on February 11, 1995 when we held our organizational meeting.

One of the things we decided at the first meeting was that we were not going to cover Filipino American history. There was another group, the Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS), that was already active in that field. Since they did not seem to be interested in Philippine history, there would be no overlap and we would not be competing with another group as most Filipino organizations are wont to.

Thus, the Philippine History Group of Los Angeles (PHGLA) was born.

The idea behind the group was simple. At each meeting, a member will make a presentation and lead a discussion on a topic previously assigned to him. A moderator will keep everybody in line and focused on the subject. The moderator also will see to it that all business matters are taken up and that everything on the agenda is on schedule.

We decided to hold our meetings every second Saturday of the month at nine o'clock in the morning in the library. That gave us a chance to have coffee and rolls while we had our discussion meeting. It was too early for some people but they agreed it was not too bad since it was only once a month and that they still had the rest

of the day to do their usual weekend chores.

We were going to be an informal organization for as long as we can manage to do so-- that meant no officers and no organizational structure. It has been that way but a structure may have to be put in place soon.

PHGLA struggled through the first few months. People would drop out as they lost interest, or as they moved to another area where it was not convenient to drive to the library. There were a few times when only three or four people showed up.

Luckily, quality members started to join and attendance grew. We now have a core of regulars who provide stability to the organization. We also have some people who continually drop in when they can although they don't show up every time. We hope our experience can serve as an example to those who want to start similar discussion groups elsewhere-- a dedicated core is essential in keeping an organization alive.

The monthly meetings have become a vehicle for members to hone their presentation skills. A few have improved their pacing and timing tremendously while others have become better speakers. Everybody has learned how to be a better and more careful researcher as sharp minds raise questions that only a well-prepared discussion leader can answer. All in all, everyone has benefitted from his association with PHGLA.

At present, PHGLA has members who can be called upon on short notice to speak about topics in Philippine history. Our members have spoken before "at-risk" students and their counselors, veterans organizations, senior citizen groups, and educators. We have put up exhibits in Philippine cultural fairs and shows. We have lent exhibit panels on Philippine history subjects to organizations for their meetings and we make them available for loan to interested groups.

And yes, we now have our own web site. It is accessed by people from all over the world and we get frequent requests to reprint the articles we have put up. ■ (Hector Santos)

A whole new approach to frequent flyer award travel with launch of one-way flex awards

Customers can combine various one-way awards to best meet travel needs

FORT WORTH, TEXAS – American Airlines, which invented the frequent flyer program when it launched the AAdvantage program nearly three decades ago, has further revolutionized award travel by introducing an exciting new feature – “One-Way Flex Awards.” One-Way Flex Awards offer a whole new approach to frequent flyer award travel, creating even greater value for AAdvantage members. Customers can get further details on One-Way Flex Awards, and view an online demo, at www.aa.com/flexawards.

The One-Way Flex feature gives AAdvantage members more options when redeeming award travel, offering – for the first time – the ability to use miles on a one-way basis at half the round-trip mileage requirement. At the same time, American is offering AAdvantage members who travel round trip the ability to combine different types of one-way awards on a single ticket. Therefore, customers may now combine MileSAver awards with AAnytime awards, or economy class awards with First or Business Class awards – to customize award travel to best meet their needs.

American is the first major domestic airline to offer a one-way award ticket at a true one-way price – just half the amount of the required round-trip miles.

With One-Way Flex Awards, there are no changes to AAnytime or MileSAver mileage requirements – just more options, value and greater flexibility. The difference is that customers can now redeem awards on a one-way basis or combine multiple award types on a single round-trip ticket – a true “win-win” for customers.

“Ever since the AAdvantage program was launched in 1981, American has continuously made improvements that make the program more valuable for our members and ensure our industry leadership position,” said Rob Friedman, President – AAdvantage Marketing Programs. “Our One-Way Flex feature takes frequent flyer award travel to a whole new level by offering customers unprecedented options and flexibility.”

One-Way Flex awards

The following highlight the primary features of American's One-Way Flex Awards, which are available now for award travel on American Airlines, American Eagle or AmericanConnection carriers:

One-Way Flex Awards give AAdvantage members the flexibility to combine different one-way awards on a single itinerary. For instance, a member may travel outbound on an economy class MileSAver award and return on an economy class AAnytime award. Or, a member may choose to travel in different classes of service on a trip, such as traveling outbound in Business or First Class and returning in economy class.

AAdvantage members can now redeem one-way awards at a one-way price. If a member is only traveling one-way, or doesn't have a return date in mind, the member can simply book one-way travel – for half the round-trip miles. For instance, a customer may fly one-way using a domestic MileSAA-

ver economy class ticket for 12,500 miles – half the amount required for a round-trip domestic award, which currently requires 25,000 miles.

AAdvantage members may book One-Way Flex Awards by using the newly enhanced, easy-to-read, color-coded availability calendar on AA.com – allowing members to determine the dates, flights and award types that work best for them.

Even More Enhancements for Award Travel on AA.com

In addition to introducing One-Way Flex awards, American has enhanced AA.com to make booking AAdvantage award travel online even more convenient. Now, members can:

Book multi-city award trips on AA.com, which is especially helpful for members needing to travel to more than one city in a single trip. Customers now can book up to four one-way awards at one time, an expansion from previous capabilities that allowed booking only round-trip travel. Multi-city award booking also allows customers to book travel into one city and return from another. For example, travel to London but return from Paris.

Book award travel en español. Customers who prefer doing business in Spanish now can book AAdvantage award travel online in Spanish. The new Spanish-language tool is accessed by clicking “Español” on the AA.com home page or by accessing one of the country-specific, Spanish-language portals American offers at www.aa.com/espanol.

American's innovative changes to the AAdvantage program – made after extensive research and study – coupled with the technology enhancements to AA.com, make redeeming one-way and combinable awards quick, easy and convenient.

“American is blazing the trail with technology solutions that make innovative and customer-friendly enhancements a reality for our customers,” said Andrew Watson, American's Vice President – Customer Technology. “Our customers asked for more options, flexibility and speed when shopping and booking award travel on AA.com – and that's just what we've delivered. Our commitment is to leverage the most up-to-date technology to meet and exceed our customer's expectations.”

The AAdvantage Program was the first and is the world's largest frequent flyer program. Established in 1981, the program now has more than 60 million members. Members can earn miles at more than 1,000 participating companies, which include more than 30 hotel chains representing more than 60 brands, more than 20 airlines, eight car-rental companies, 12 financial companies, and over 250 brand name retailers. In addition, members can earn miles when making purchases with one of more than 100 affinity card products in over 40 countries. In 2008, AAdvantage members redeemed more than 155 billion miles to claim more than 4.8 million awards for flights, upgrades and car rentals. For more information and a listing of AAdvantage program participating companies, visit www.aa.com/aadvantage.

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