

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

US tops OAV registration—DFA exec

PAGE 1 ◀

However, Seguis said the turnout was still low, attributing this to the Filipino mentality of doing things at the last minute.

“That’s why we’re urging all Filipinos abroad, starting with diplomats and staff members in all Philippine posts around the world, as well as their dependents, to register now. Don’t

wait until the last minute,” he said.

The DFA official said he remained hopeful that the one-million target for OAV registrants could be reached.

“This is an opportunity to choose our leaders. This is also our duty,” he said. Seguis said he expected registration to shoot up when another bill, the one to

undo the requirement for an affidavit promising to return to the Philippines, would become law.

After the US, the next nine countries with the most number of OAV registrants are: China, with 1,844; Canada, 1,404; United Kingdom, 1,085; Singapore, 987; Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 470; Spain, 468; Italy, 440; Brunei, 306; and Kuwait, 236.

By continent, Americas got the most with 4,709; Asia and the Pacific, 3,835; Europe, 2,821; Middle East and Africa, 1,325;

By Philippine posts, the top 10 are: Hong Kong, 1,717; Los Angeles, 1,611; Toronto, 1,169; London, 1,085; Singapore, 987; New York, 858; Washington DC, 387; Riyadh, 334; Barcelona, 324; and Brunei, 306.

For Filipinos who left the country this year, 1, 755 registered at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and 2,110 at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

This seven-month registration period, from February 2009 to August 2009, is the third for overseas Filipinos after the Overseas Absentee Voting Law was passed in 2003 for the 2004 presidential elections. ■

RP seen avoiding recession this year

PAGE 1 ◀

local issuers would thus likely tap the domestic markets.

As to whether there would likely be a crowding out among local borrowers, Watkinson said: “You’ve got to get your timing right. If you go to the market, you’ve got to be conscious who else is issuing at the same time you are. If you issue at the wrong time, at the wrong price, nobody’s going to take your bond.

HSBC, along with the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines, is the lead issuer manager of San Miguel Brewery’s maiden peso-denominated bond offering worth up to P38.8 billion, the biggest in local bond history.

He said the issuance, which generated warm appetite among investors, would likely be completed by the first week of April.

“There’s no doubt that San Miguel transaction will be the benchmark for local bond transactions,” Watkinson said.

SMB is offering three-five-and-10-year bonds but Watkinson said the five-year bonds would likely get the biggest demand given the tax advantages. Local securities with tenor of five years or more are tax-exempt in the Philippines. ■

Pelaez biography covers relevant themes today

PAGE 1 ◀

provides an intimate account not only of the statesman whose political career spanned the Magsaysay, Garcia, Macapagal, Marcos and Aquino eras but also of the key personalities of those periods.

What’s Happening to Our Country? provides an interesting

glimpse of the pre-Marcos era when “for one brief shining moment, (Emmanuel Pelaez) stood as the nation’s one great hope against the coming Marcosian darkness.” In the months prior to the Nacionalista convention where political upstart Ferdinand Marcos wrested the presidential

nomination, Pelaez was the “acknowledged frontrunner, way ahead in the delegate count,” recalls Navarro.

Pelaez’s fatal mistake was that he had entered into a gentleman’s agreement with Marcos not to resort to fraud or buying the votes of the Nacionalista Party delegates. Pelaez kept his word despite Marcos’ mockery of that agreement. Even as the vice-president’s aides urged him to make use of the contributions that had poured in from backers bent on seeing Marcos defeated at all costs, he wouldn’t budge. As recounted in the book where history is retold as passionate narrative, Pelaez’s unwavering answer to frantic campaign advisers and financiers was: “I would rather be right than be president.”

Throughout the rest of Pelaez’s career as congressman and senator in the ‘60s and early ‘70s, as an assemblyman from 1978 to 1984, as fierce crusader against the controversial coconut levy, and as President Aquino’s man in Washington during those tumultuous years, Pelaez would often recall the convention and other defining moments in his life when he paid a stiff price for defending his political integrity.

The Navarro volume finds relevance today when the integrity of the Philippines’ highest officials has time and again been questioned and has become cause for persistent political destabilization.

In the early 1982 at the height of Marcos’ rule, Pelaez integrity once more caught public attention when he denounced the

injustice of the coconut levy and the coconut trading monopoly, which left many farmers destitute. Soon after, he suffered an assassination attempt. As he was being wheeled into the operating room, Pelaez said the now famous statement: “What is happening to our country?” The phrase became an indictment against the Marcos administration.

In honor of the statesman, the Emmanuel Pelaez Foundation is also involved in projects on environmental awareness and preservation such as reforestation and regeneration of the coral reefs; a housing program in partnership with Gawad Kalinga; and training facilities for the fishermen in Medina, Misamis Oriental. Proceeds from the book will be earmarked for these programs. ■

LA Mayor honors Pacquiao

PAGE 1 ◀

been planted around Historic Filipinotown and more than 200,000 new trees in the city of Los Angeles as of February.

Villaraigosa challenged the crowd to plant their own tree in honor of Pacquiao.

“I want everybody in this town, every one of you today in honor of Manny Pacquiao,” said Villaraigosa. “Plant a tree in front of your home, a tree in your yard, a tree in your community in honor of a world champion, that is considered the best pound-4-pound and a good human being.”

Giving Villaraigosa a hard time

Before Pacquiao and Villaraigosa met with the estimated 300 people in the crowd outside SIPA, media members gave Villaraigosa a hard time about who he was rooting for in the Pacquiao vs. Oscar De La Hoya match last December.

Villaraigosa, a Mexican-American, said that he’s a good friend of De La Hoya’s and admitted he was rooting for his friend during the fight.

“I know I’m being honest, I’ve known Oscar for a long time,” said Villaraigosa.

“But I have to say that Manny showed that he was the true champion that night.” (*Joseph Pimentel*)

Muñoz loses, Vera wins in UFC 96

PAGE 1 ◀

Muñoz making his UFC debut faced off against UFC veteran Hamill. It was the first fight in the UFC for the 30-year-old Muñoz, who had won his previous battles in UFC’s sister organization, the World Extreme Cagefighting.

From the very start, it appeared that Muñoz had opening round jitters. Hamill took the fight to him, continuously stalking and backing the smaller Muñoz into the octagon corners. With a five-inch reach advantage, Hamill used a blistering left jab to fluster the Fil-Am from Vallejo, CA. Munoz tried to use his wrestling to his advantage but Hamill defended Muñoz’s takedown attempts well, making it a stand up brawl.

Midway through the first round, Hamill continued to pound Muñoz with left jabs. With Muñoz back towards the octagon, Hamill threw a vicious right kick to Muñoz’s head, instantly knocking the latter out.

Replays showed that Hamill’s shin connected dead-on around Muñoz’s left temple. As Muñoz was falling, his head hit his right knee before he slumped down on the corner of the octagon. Medical officials immediately brought out a stretcher and cared for Muñoz, who according to his sister Rheanne, was okay afterwards.

“He walked out on his own,” said Rheanne to this reporter. “We will keep you posted.”

An arranged Asian Journal post-fight interview with Muñoz was cancelled.

With the loss, Muñoz record falls to 5-1. Hamill’s record improves to 8-2.

Vera making a comeback

A new slim and fit Vera showed that he still has the skills that made him one of the most dangerous fighters in 2007. After struggling in 2008 because of weight issues, Vera nicknamed “The Truth” showed he should be mentioned among the deep and talented UFC light heavyweight class. Fighting against Patt White, Vera controlled the fight early with vicious leg kicks. It wasn’t much of a contest since the shorter White couldn’t even get in range to attack Vera.

In the second round, Vera continued to pepper White’s left leg with right kicks. Finally, Vera had enough and finished White with a vicious right kick to White’s left kneecap. White hobbled and fell to the floor. Once he got back up, Vera kicked White’s ailing left leg again before the referee signaled the match was over.

“I’m back baby,” said Vera. “2008 was a tough year for me but I want everybody to know that the Truth is back.”

Prior to this win, Vera had lost three of his last four fights, most in the heavyweight division. Vera’s record now improves to 10-3. (*Joseph Pimentel*)

Pinoy wins P6.6M in Reader’s Digest contest

PAGE 1 ◀

to them that money was not the answer to everything in life.

Dangcalan, who has been reading the *Reader’s Digest* since his high school days in Cebu, has been subscribing to the magazine, on and off, for years.

He said he liked the way the magazine “presents various interesting topics and gives a lot of information in a very concise manner.” On top of that, he said, its compact size sets it apart from other magazines because it is handy and can be brought anywhere.

Yes or no

As a subscriber, Dangcalan has continually received direct mail promotions and sweepstakes offers sent out by *Reader’s Digest* to promote not only the magazine but also other reading materials.

Dangcalan said he had been sending entries to the direct mail contests since 2006, but luck had proved elusive.

In 2008, he received yet another product offer asking customers to return the mail with either a “yes” or “no” reply. He sent a “No” reply signifying he wasn’t interested in the offered product.

It was that entry that brought him P6.6 million.

Promise to God

Dangcalan said he and his wife considered the prize to be “a blessing and an answered prayer.”

Dangcalan said his prayer was accompanied by a promise to God that if he won the prize, the money would not only be for himself but would be shared with others. ■

Why Atty. Gurfinkel?

“Atty. Gurfinkel is kapamilya. Without his help, I cannot bring joy to countless of kapamilya in America.”

Willie Revillame
TV HOST

To schedule a phone or in-person consultation, call

Toll free 1 (866) 487-3465

1 (866) GURFINKEL

MICHAEL
GURFINKEL
LAW OFFICES

A Full Service Immigration Law Firm

www.gurfinkel.com

LOS ANGELES • SAN FRANCISCO • NEW YORK • PHILIPPINES

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. The information contained herein, including testimonials, “Success Stories” or endorsements are of general nature, and not intended to apply to any particular case, and do not constitute a prediction, warranty, guarantee or legal advice regarding the outcome of your legal matter. No attorney-client relationship is, or shall be, established hereby.