

# People and Events

## Father Fernando to perform three healing services in NJ

THE well-known Filipino-Canadian healing priest Fernando Suarez will perform two more healing services in New Jersey in addition to an earlier announced healing session on Friday, March 27, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, 29 N Washington Avenue, Bergenfield, NJ 07621.

According to Father Fernando's Web site at [www.fatherfernando.com](http://www.fatherfernando.com) the other NJ healing events are scheduled on March 26 at 7:00 p.m. in Christ the King Church at 411 Rutgers Avenue, Hillside, NJ 07205 and on March 31 at 7:30 p.m. in St. Veronica Parish, 4215 Highway 9, Howell, NJ 07731.

It may be recalled that Fr. Fernando also conducted three healing services in New Jersey last year. In all those events, the healer prayed over some 7,000 people in three NJ churches.

The humble Batangas-born priest healer, who studied chemical engineering in Manila before he shifted to priesthood in Canada, tells people who ask about his healing power that it is a gift from God, not for him, but for them.

The forthcoming NJ healing sessions are open to the public. ■

## 2009 Lenten Retreat at the Our Lady of Peace Hall

ALLENTEEN Retreat: We normally understand Lent as a time, first of all, to reflect on our lives and to become aware of the areas in our life which are less than satisfactory in terms of spiritual growth and our growth as persons and our relationship with God.

It is a time of penitence – of expressing sorrow to God, and to those whom we have hurt in some way, perhaps doing some acts of self-denial and celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a meaningful way.

It is also a time when we reflect in a special way on what God has done for us and how he has shown his love for us through the life – and especially through the sufferings and death of his Son Jesus Christ.

All of this is combined in the three Scripture passages suggested for our prayer on this day. Of course, if there are other Scripture texts which you would find more meaningful for Lent (and there are endless possibilities), please feel perfectly free to use them.

The important thing is, in the words of St Ignatius Loyola, "to find fruit" for oneself at this particular time.

Come and join us!

2009 Lenten Retreat  
At the Our Lady of Peace Hall  
237 E 62nd St, New York  
(between 2nd/3rd Avenue)  
(By subway: N, R, F)  
(212) 838-3189  
March 29, 2009  
10:00am – 4 pm  
Fr. Jim Loughran - facilitator ■

## AFTA Car Raffle in May 2009

THE Association of Filipino Teachers in America (AFTA) announces the postponement of its car raffle from December 27, 2008 to May 9, 2009 during AFTA's 20th Anniversary celebration which will be held at Astoria World Manor, 25-22 Astoria Blvd., Astoria, NY 11102.

This will give us time to collect all stubs and payments as well as sell more tickets.

Please continue your support for this project as we undertake new programs for the Filipino American Community in the Tristate area for the year 2009.

If you need more tickets, please call Pennie (347) 326-8778, Miliza (646) 894-4178, or Ronie (718) 213-2399. ■

## THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### March 21] Saturday

#### Divas 4 Divas Concert

MPG Global Productions presents The Biggest Concert Event Coming to Atlantic City! Featuring the Fabulous Four: Zsa-Zsa Padilla, Pops Fernandez, Regine Velasquez, and Kuh Ledesma. With Special guest: Gabby Concepcion. For details and ticket information, please call: Bing (732) 668-8892, (732) 447-8678, (732) 257-4560; Salve (732) 651-8566; Terry (201) 886-1705, (347) 234-8797; Amy (201) 253-9405.

### Chapter 2 Band

On March 21, Saturday, 9:30 pm, Chapter 2 performs for the first time at another hotel under the prestigious Hilton chain, this time at the Garden Inn in Staten Island, Lobby Lounge (1100 South Ave., Staten Island, NY 10314). For more info. Visit [www.chapter2band.com](http://www.chapter2band.com)

### Fashion Show(201) 332-4711.

### March 28] Saturday

#### La Salle & Friends Day of Lenten Reflection

San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel, 378 Broome St., NYC at 8:30am Half-day session to be conducted by Fr. Mike Lagrimas. Open to La Salle alumni and friends, in cooperation with San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel team ministry. Contact Iris at [irisbuhay@hotmail.com](mailto:irisbuhay@hotmail.com), Chester at [chestermedina@gmail.com](mailto:chestermedina@gmail.com), or 201-434-1964.

#### Wanted: Chess players to challenge New York State Champion

Ayala Foundation-USA and the Philippine Consulate General of NY proudly present: The AFUSA-NY Tri-State Chess Challenge We're looking for chess players! Nonoy Rafael, the 2008 New York State Champion, has issued a challenge. He will play up to 20 (maybe even 30) players simultaneously in the AFUSA-NY Tri-State Chess Challenge for the Ayala Foundation GILAS Project. Nonoy is one of our growing group of volunteers for GILAS. Venue is at the Philippine Center, 56 Fifth Ave. (5th Ave. and 45th St.) from 1pm-5pm. Registration is \$25. For more info., contact (917) 609-2587 or email [maecclips@aol.com](mailto:maecclips@aol.com)

## Divas 4 Divas concert ...

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dynamics of every artist's peculiar persona in terms of singing style and fashion sense --- ultimately creating a fabulous explosion of grandeur in terms of production values worthy of every viewer's effort, time and money.

The repertoire itself is a dream collection of trademarked arias and vocal renditions that literally suspend one in ecstatic fascination and a melodiously achieved vocal quartette that uncontrollably lures the audience to reminisce the not-so-distant past...dramatically re-living and embracing the gone-by days in a nostalgic passion.

And as if the four DIVAS aren't enough to hold the crowd, the ladies' unanimous choice to be with them on stage is none other than Gabby Concepcion! After almost a decade-long of self-imposed hiatus in the West Coast, (North California) debonair screen idol and the uncontested male version of that "face that refreshes," Gabby Concepcion returns to the entertainment are-

na with a "vengeance." Though having mellowed noticeably, Gabby hasn't shed off nor lost that boy-next-door-appeal and gentlemanly image he was distinctly known for.

Be part of another historical event as the *Divas4Divas* magic unfolds before your very eyes when MPG Global Productions, LLC brings to fore this entertainment package at the Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, Saturday, March 21, 2009 at 8:00 PM.

Partial list of sponsors (as of press time) include Western Union, FDG Consulting Firm, Filipino Ithawan, Kalesa House of Grill, Harrah's of Atlantic City, Perlas Ng Silangan and Asian Journal. For additional details, information and inquiries, please contact: MPG\_Productions@yahoo.com or visit [www.mpgglobalproductions.com](http://www.mpgglobalproductions.com). You can also contact Carousel Pinoy Entertainment at (201)886-1705 or login at [www.carouselpinoy.com](http://www.carouselpinoy.com) and [www.pinoyticket.com](http://www.pinoyticket.com)

MPG Global Productions wishes to thank everybody who came to watch the show.

(Advertising Supplement)

## Western Union launches its first-ever Global Brand Campaign

ENGLEWOOD, COLORADO - For the first time in the company's 150-year history, Western Union has recently launched a comprehensive global brand initiative, entitled yes! This campaign celebrates people around the world who rely on the transfer of money across borders and oceans to help them embrace their hopes and dreams.

"This is a very exciting time for Western Union," said Mohit Bijlani, Western Union Manager, Philippines. "Western Union believes in people pursuing their dreams. Even in these uncertain times, the optimism and positivity of our consumers is inspiring, and this new campaign reflects their can-do spirit. Can a mother send her love to her son from 6,000 miles away? The answer is yes! Western Union's money transfer services have been enabling these connections between Filipinos around the globe for 19 years."

The yes! brand campaign will be translated in 40 languages, and will consist of several marketing elements. There will be print, broadcast and online advertising, as well as new Point-of-Sale materials for more than 334,000 Agents in 200 countries and territories. Street art, billboards and other out-of-home creative will also be introduced globally. Western Union



(From left to right) Mohit Bijlani, Senior Marketing Manager of Western Union, Philippines, Shirlen Velasquez, Senior Product Manager of Western Union, Philippines and Grace Labagus, Assistant Project Manager of Unlimited Events & Marketing.

has also launched a dedication microsite, [www.wuyeseffect.com](http://www.wuyeseffect.com). This site seeks to engage consumers and empower them to share their stories of optimism and success through March 26. For each story submitted, Western Union will donate US\$1, up to a total donation of US\$50,000, which will be matched by the Western Union Foundation, up to a total donation of US\$50,000, to education-focused non-profit partners Mercy Corps, Room to Read and Academy for Educational Development.

As part of its Our World, Our Family® program, the Western Union Foundation provided

The Family Scholarship Program, which rewarded education scholarships to families within the Guatemalan and Filipino Diaspora in the Los Angeles, California area. This program will soon expand to include the Mexican Diaspora.

Western Union assembled prominent creative talent for the campaign, including world-renowned film director Antoine Bardou-Jacquet, celebrated photojournalist Steve McCurry and famed typographer David Carson. Western Union selected these artists because of the humanity in their work and the contemporary fresh face

their collaboration brings to the brand. Bardou-Jacquet and McCurry traveled the world to capture the striking images behind the campaign, including stops in Morocco, Singapore, Los Angeles and Cape Town, South Africa.

The creative behind Western Union's campaign centers on the optimism and hope inherent in the word "yes!" and highlights tangible acts that bring the brand to life. The yes! campaign clearly and emotionally communicates its optimistic point of view using real people in its advertisements reflecting the global nature of Western Union.

(Advertising Supplement)

## 'Boses' Garner 12 Nominations in the 2009 Golden Screen Awards

THE 6th Golden Screen Awards (Philippine version of the Golden Globes) recently announced its nominations for the best films of 2008. BOSES leads the pack with 12 nominations:

- \* Best Motion Picture
  - \* Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role - Cherry Pie Picache
  - \* Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role - Ricky Davao
  - \* Best Breakthrough Performance - Coke Bolipata and Julian Duque
  - \* Best Director - Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil
  - \* Best Original Screenplay- Froilan Medina, Rody Vera
  - \* Best Cinematography- Nap Jamir
  - \* Best Editing - Orlean Joseph Tan
  - \* Best Production Design - Bianca Gonzales
  - \* Best Sound - Allan Marcelo Hidalgo, Orlean Joseph Tan
  - \* Best Musical Score - Jourdan Petalver
- Boses is about the healing power of music and the redemption of the human spirit. Onyok, a child made mute at the hands of his own father is sent to a shelter for abused children where he is cared for by social workers. Nobody can get through to Onyok until he meets Ariel a reclusive violin teacher. Although reluctantly at first as he himself is haunted by guilt and the memory of his dead girlfriend, Ariel discovers that Onyok is a gifted child. Together they battle their demons until they regain their voice, rediscover their spirit and realize that forgiveness is within their reach.
- Boses will premiere in New York City on

Friday, May 1, 2009. Sponsored by the Assumption Alumnae organization, the 4-hour event will include a reception with Ricky Davao and Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil, Boses Director, a film screening and a musical concert by Ricky Davao. Also gracing the event is renowned Filipino musician Michael Dadap, the Artistic Director of the New York based Children's Society Orchestra.

Proceeds will be shared with advocacy groups working to stop violence against children and Daang-Sine, the creative group behind Boses - - in support of their mission to educate and create an awareness of social issues through their films. This film is endorsed by UNICEF. Rated PG 13.

- Details:
- \* Tickets - \$25.00
  - \* Contact Vina Francisco at 646 203-1611, [vins\\_nyc@yahoo.com](mailto:vins_nyc@yahoo.com)
  - \* Boses blog: <http://bores-premieres-nyc-may1-2009.blogspot.com/>
  - \* Boses official trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfvmRXLsEm8>
  - \* Date: Friday, May 1, 2009
  - \* Time: 6-10pm (Film Screening to begin at 7pm)
  - \* Place: Saint Paul the Apostle Church, 60th and Columbus



\* Light refreshments will be served during the reception and a food concession (Cornucopia) will also be available throughout the evening. ■

## Ayala Foundation USA challenges Filipino Community to Chess Challenge

THE Ayala Foundation USA New York Tri-State Team, the Philippine Consulate General of New York and volunteer Nonoy Rafael have challenged the Filipino community in the area to a Chess Challenge on Saturday, March 28, at the Philippine Center on Fifth Avenue in New York City. 2008 NY State Chess Champion, Nonoy has dared the Filipino community to play against him to promote and benefit the GILAS Project. He will play up to 20 players at the same time.

GILAS is private/public partnership led by Ayala Foundation, aimed at wiring all Philippine public high schools to the Internet. The goal is to build PC labs in all 6,300 public high schools in the Philippines. Over 2,100 schools have been connected, serving over 1,000,000 students meet the challenge of the 21st century.

In addition to the 2008 title, Nonoy was 2007 NYC Inter-Bank League Team MVP, World Open Champion, NY Open Champion, five-time De La Salle University Champion, NCAA Board 1 Gold Medalist, Philippine Junior Finalist. He is Chief Tournament Director of the NY Fil-Am Chess Club for the past 20 years. He has more than 30 years of competitive chess experience. He is currently a Program manager for an aerospace company. Nonoy is a graduate of De La Salle University in the Philippines and Columbia University in New York. He is also the NY Chapter Vice President of the Filipino American Association of Engineers and was Vice President of the De La Salle Alumni Association - East Coast.

"There's almost a two-decade of hiatus in my competitive chess career primarily due to change in priorities in my life, family and career. However, I never really left the game,"

Nonoy said, "Indeed, I was actually still playing chess during my spare time on-line which is very convenient nowadays and saves a lot of my busy time. Also, I was a team captain and tournament directors of various Fil-Am chess activities in the area."

Chess players, family, friends, students and colleagues are invited to play Nonoy! He may even give you pointers on your game! There's prizes to those who beat Nonoy. Registration fee to play is \$25 per person. FREE Admission to attend the event and cheer on your favorite player (the challenger or Nonoy). Brunch/Merienda will be served.

Pass the word along. We also welcome sponsors to back challengers to play Nonoy. For more info to play, visit: <http://webdmdrieo.googlepages.com/chesschallenge>.

Join the Chess Challenge to help Filipino students Meet the Challenge! ■

## Plight of 30s FOWs in new musical

by AMIABLE M. ROSS-YBASCO

THE George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick, NJ is staging a new musical depicting the plight of Filipino overseas workers in the 1930s. The production of *The Long Season* is made possible through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Filipino overseas worker migration to the United States has three sides.

One is the very successful story of the 70s immigrants. Armed with diplomas from prestigious universities, assorted family heirlooms, and \$500 (the legal limit of dollars one can bring out of the country), these wave found 9-5 jobs which paid well. This group had succeeded to the point that they put the Filipinos on the list of one of the wealthiest immigrants

in the United States today.

Then there is the overseas domestic help migration. In spite of the longer hours, no weekends off, and menial labor, this group managed to send money to help their family back home. Their selfless devotion and the unstinting care they provide helped rate the Filipino domestic as one of the most sought after and trusted babysitters, care providers, and domestics the world over.

The third side of the story remains an enigma to a majority of Filipinos – the 30s migration of agricultural and factory laborers. The migration to work in the fields in Hawaii and California was an understandable choice for most of my countrymen in the 30s. However, I am among those of my generation who is

totally ignorant of the 30s Filipino migration to canneries in Alaska. Why a Filipino will leave the pleasant climate of our country to go to a cold place like Alaska to find work is almost totally beyond comprehension.

The George Street Playhouse aims to fill this void with the staging of "The Long Season" in its 2010 season. Based on the highly acclaimed Carlos Bolosan novel, *America is in the Heart*, this "epic musical" is a collaboration between playwright Chay Yew and composer Fabian Obispo. The story focuses on the 30s migration of the hundreds to Filipinos chasing the American dream by working in the Alaskan salmon canneries.

Instead of the promised "streets paved with gold," the

workers found long hours of backbreaking work where stone-hearted supervisors spurred them to work faster and harder. In addition, these FOWs endured deplorable living conditions. In an era before Alaska became a state and before laborers were unionized, the musical follows the Filipino struggle to maintain dignity, despite all odds of discrimination, language barrier, and cultural acclimation.

Like their 70s compatriots, these trail-blazing Filipinos rose above their difficulties. They found salvation in their active participation in the labor union movement. And like their 70s compatriots, they gave the Filipinos another moment of glory in the face of surmounting adversarities. *Mabuhay ang Filipino!* ■