

# People and Events

## Community fights to save local Catholic education

Group of parents and community to hold a rally on March 22

JERSEY CITY, NJ—In the February 13, 2009 issue of the *Jersey Journal*, Newark Archbishop John J. Myers was quoted saying “Our Lady of Victories Parish does not have the financial resources to subsidize the school.” The church’s parish priest Rev. Victor E. Paloma was also quoted saying “If we would continue with this number it would bankrupt the parish.” The numbers quoted by the church have been proven wrong.

Students, teachers, employees, alumni and parents of the OLV School have joined together in an effort to show the Archdiocese of Newark that their beloved school is the future of Catholic education in Jersey City. A committee has recently put a proposal and business plan to the Archdiocese, planning for the

incorporation of the School, thus reducing the risk of potential financial burden to the Archdiocese by a parish-owned school. The parents of all but 7 students have committed to sending their children to OLV next year, and new enrollment commitments have been sent by more than a dozen families, since the efforts to keep OLV open have become public, and continue to come in.

In his written message of support, Jersey City Mayor Jeremiah Healy said “The Office of the Mayor wholeheartedly endorses and recognizes the need for continuing faith-based education in Jersey City. These educational institutions have proven to be a strong catalyst in building productive individuals and civic leaders.

They provide the diversity in educational preferences in

our City.”

“This could be the start of a new beginning of strength for Catholic education, and hopefully reverse the trend of Catholic school closings,” said Freeholder Bill O’Dea, who is an integral part of the effort said. “This is a win-win situation for everybody. The church can continue with its mission of spreading the good news five days a week, while parents and students will have the option of affordable and accessible faith based education. In addition, the City will be relieved of further property tax burden by these parents who are willing to pay, even in this economy, for the future of their kids.”

The OLV Community has scheduled a rally on Sunday, March 22 starting at 9:30 am in front of OLV church located at 2217 J.F. Kennedy Blvd, Jersey

City, New Jersey (at Ege), to appeal to the Archdiocese to act as soon as possible to allow them to run the school. Community leaders, including Mayor Healy and his City candidate team, Philip Kenny who represents the area, mayoral candidate Lou Manzo and his team have all committed to being in attendance. Parents, students, teachers and community members invite everyone to come show their support.

State Senator Ray Lesniak, who is sponsoring a bill in Trenton that would provide tax credits to families sending their children to these schools, has also been invited to this event.

Please contact Jake Malasig at 201-320-4728 (cell) or at his e-mail [jakegmalasig@gmail.com](mailto:jakegmalasig@gmail.com) for further information. ■

## Lavarro, Manzo team council candidate for Ward A, opens headquarters

JERSEY CITY, NJ—With the passing of the petition deadline for candidacy for the Jersey City municipal elections, Rolando Lavarro, Manzo Team 2009 candidate for Councilperson of Ward A, turns his focus fully in solidifying voter support.

Last Saturday, March 21, Lavarro’s Ward A Headquarters was opened to welcome supporters, voters, and the Jersey City public who were eager to meet him and the entire Manzo Team.

The club will serve as the base of Lavarro’s canvassing operations and other activities as he works to win the votes and support of the people of Ward A. The public met Lavarro and the rest of Manzo Team 2009, and heard his vision and priorities for Ward A and the entire Jersey City.

Lavarro already received a letter from the City Clerk of Jersey City notifying him that he will be placed on the ballot for the May 12 municipal elec-

tions. Lavarro is vying to be the first Filipino/Asian American to be elected as Councilperson in Jersey City, who turned in a total of 512 petitions by the March 19th filing deadline.

Getting on the ballot as candidate for Councilperson of Ward A requires obtaining and submitting 261 valid nominating petitions. Valid nomination petitions can only be filed by registered voters residing in Ward A, which includes Greenville, Country Village, Port Liberte, and Society Hill.

“It’s been great so far. I’m very, very excited. We have some extraordinary volunteers... my family and friends, community members, Henry Racelis and the members of the Filipino American Political Action Committee (FAPAC) have been so very supportive. I love this... walking and talking to Jersey City voters, hearing their concerns and what’s important to them,” said Lavarro. “We have more in common across differ-

ent ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds than (we have that) separates us. I am looking forward to speaking directly to the people of Jersey City over the next two months.”

Mayoral candidate Louis Manzo, Council-At-Large candidates Betty Outlaw, Joseph Cassidy, Lori Serrano will be in attendance, along with various community leaders.

The event also marks the commencement of Lavarro’s walking tour of Ward A, as he goes door-to-door to meet voters in 34 districts. Lavarro’s campaign is calling for volunteers to support his tour and mount an aggressive challenge against the incumbents.

“Our campaign is a grassroots community effort,” said Lavarro. “We have a growing number of volunteers and supporters who are people who have not been politically active before. Our campaign is not made up of the same old crowd running our politics in Jersey

City. I’m fired up by their energy and enthusiasm.”

Lavarro is a lifelong resident of Greenville and an alumnus of St. Paul’s Grammar School and St. Peter’s Preparatory School. He has served as Aide to Councilwoman Mary Donnelly of Ward B, and Director of Constituent Services of Assemblyman Robert Gordon of Bergen County. He was a co-founder of Sumisibol and former Executive Director of the Philippine American Friendship Committee-Community Development Center (PAFCOM-CDC). Lavarro is currently the Assistant Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs at New Jersey City University, and also the volunteer Coalition Director of the Jersey City Communities That Care Coalition (JCCTCC).

To volunteer, donate, or get more information about Rolando Lavarro for Councilman, please call 201-377-0387 or send an e-mail to [lavarro2009@gmail.com](mailto:lavarro2009@gmail.com). ■

## Asian American groups support the provision of the voting rights act

NEW YORK, NY—The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), a 35-year-old national civil rights organization, filed an amicus “friend of the court” brief in the US Supreme Court on behalf of 41 Asian American groups, urging the Court to uphold the constitutionality of the enforcement provision of the Voting Rights Act in North-

west Austin Municipal Utility District Number One v. Holder. AALDEF’s pro bono counsel is Proskauer Rose LLP.

Glenn D. Magpantay, AALDEF staff attorney said, “Asian Americans have continued to face discriminatory obstacles in exercising their right to vote. The Supreme Court should uphold the Voting Rights Act.”

The enforcement provision,

known as “Section 5,” requires jurisdictions with a history of voting discrimination to get approval from the US Department of Justice before implementing changes in voting procedures and practices, in order to ensure that the changes will not make it more difficult for racial and ethnic minorities to exercise their right to vote. The lower court upheld the provision.

AALDEF’s amicus brief cites examples of how Section 5 has protected Asian American voters with regard to school board elections, poll site changes, and compliance with Section 203, the language assistance provisions of the Voting Rights Act. The brief details how Section 5 was used to ensure fully-translated ballots and language assistance at more polling places in growing Asian

American neighborhoods. Many of these examples are from New York City, in which three counties—New York, Kings and Bronx—are covered under Section 5. A copy of the amicus brief can be downloaded at [www.aaldef.org](http://www.aaldef.org).

Last week, AALDEF presented Congress with a new report detailing voter problems faced by Asian Americans in eleven states and the District of Columbia

in the November 2008 Presidential Elections. AALDEF’s report, Asian American Access to Democracy in the 2008 Elections, documented violations of the Voting Rights Act and Help America Vote Act (HAVA), as well as other incidents of anti-Asian voter disenfranchisement from 52 cities across the country. The report is available online at [www.aaldef.org](http://www.aaldef.org). ■

## Richard Gutierrez and Rhian Ramos sizzle...

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known her personally for the past 15 to 20 years. With Jean we’ve worked on a movie 15 years ago,” Richard said in an interview with *igma.tv*.

In *All About Evee*, Richard plays Federico—a network executive who fell in love with Jean’s character, Katrina. But his mother intervened and married him off to Lisa (Ina). Later on, Federico and Katrina had an affair, which Alma (Eula), Katrina’s best friend, strongly opposed.

Lisa dies under mysterious circumstances and Katrina was sent to jail for it. While in prison, Katrina gives birth to Erika (Sunshine), her daughter by Federico. While Katrina was

in jail, Alma, who was by then Federico’s secretary, falls for Federico. They eventually tie the knot, which, of course, wouldn’t sit well with Katrina, once she gets out of jail and finds out.

“Drama is really my forte,” Richard told *igma.tv*. “I can work on the emotions, I’ll focus on the look and then I’ll focus on the script as it comes in. At least now, alam ko na ‘yung costumes ko, the initial look, and [then] I’ll work on my character of the story.”

Richard also welcomes the drama role as an opportunity to showcase his acting talents alongside his game show hosting skills in the phenomenally successful Philippine version of

*Family Feud*. He told *igma.tv*, “At least nakita ng tao ang other side ni Richard, di ba? Ang nakikita lang nila kasi the serious side when I do my movies, when I do television. It’s very serious, very straightforward, unlike sa *Family Feud*, [which] has a very personal approach.”

Catch more of Richard Gomez only on GMA Pinoy TV! Call your preferred pay TV operator now to subscribe.(30)

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**Manny Pacquiao sticks with Solar and GMA; still a Kapuso**

After his surprise decision last week to switch media partner for his coming bout against Ricky Hatton slated on May 2, Manny Pacquiao apologized last March

23 in a press conference held at the GMA Network Center in Quezon City, Philippines.

Present during the said press conference are top executives from GMA Network—Atty. Felipe L. Gozon, GMA Chairman, President and CEO, and Mr. Gilberto R. Duavit, Jr., GMA EVP and COO—and Solar Entertainment—Mr. William Tieng, Solar Chairman, and Mr. Peter Chanliang, Solar COO.

“Humihingi ako ng paumanhin sa sinumang naabala, lalo na sa Solar at GMA, at sa lahat ng kababayan ko na naguluhan sa desisyon ko na patalon-talon,” said the world’s best pound-for-pound boxer speaking via phone patch from his training base in

Los Angeles.

“Nais kong pasalamatan ang Solar Entertainment at ang GMA Network, especially FLG (Atty. Gozon) at Mr. Duavit... kay Wilma (Ms. Wilma Galvante, GMA SVP for Entertainment TV Group), kay Redgie (Ms. Redgie Magno, GMA Senior Program Manager for Entertainment TV) sa pag-intindi, pag-unawa kung anong mga sitwasyon at sana’y kalimutan na ang lahat and we have to move on.” Pacquiao further added.

GMA Network, in turn, welcomed the decision of the Pambansang Kamao to retract his announcement last week.

“Manny, wala kaming hangad sa’yo kung hindi ang kabutihan mo at maipalano mo itong laban kay Hatton. Hindi lamang para sa’yo, para sa’yong pamilya,

kundi para sa buong bayan natin. Tapos na ‘yung nangyaring ‘yan, kalimutan na natin ‘yan. And let us go forward. Mag-training kang mabuti at lahat ng mabubuting hangad namin ay nasa iyo. Mabuhay ka Manny,” Atty. Gozon said.

With the issue behind him now, Pacquiao vowed to go all out in training. “Maraming-maraming salamat sa pagtititwala at pagdarasal. At ang fight ko na ‘to ay alay ko sa mga minamahal kong kababayan sa lahat ng sulok ng mundo,” Pacquiao added.

Pacquiao’s fight with Ricky Hatton on May 2 (May 3 in the Philippines) will be seen in the Philippines for free on GMA Network. GMA’s radio stations DZBB and DWLS-FM will air the bouts live nationwide on radio.

(Advertising Supplement)

## Divas 4 Divas Concert, Fabulously Sensational!

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three-hour production was more than enough to suffice what they wanted. What more was there to ask for? The show was simply fabulous! The experience was sensational! Everybody went home loaded with prolific thoughts of that once-in-a-lifetime concert.

While the four individually established singers wound up performing harmoniously together in a shared vision and common interest supremely encompassed by a single dominant factor—

friendship! And it was truly a delight to see the four Divas doing what they love doing best... singing... and celebrating nothing but only the best of their artistry.

MPG Global Productions producer Mely “Bing” Pechangco Gabriel had lots to smile about since her latest project came out much more successful than expected despite being plagued with voluminous problems that nearly plunged her into chaos. “It wasn’t actually traumatic but more of the tensions that prevailed as the date drew closer,”

commented Bing who looked rested after a few days. “Now, I became aware of the people I could count on during times like this. Every project is always a learning experience.”

Now, more than ever, has there been any entertainment package of this magnitude with such ambitious concept, enormosity in production, lavishness in costume and diversity in repertoire. *DIVAS 4 DIVAS* was indeed one defining moment... a total celebration of music and fashion... of sights and sounds rolled

congruously into one eventful evening.

After *DIVAS 4 DIVAS*, MPG Global Production is slated to come up (again) with another equally grandiose production: Sharon Cuneta’s MEGA-THIRTY Concert on Sunday, May 31, 2009 at the NJPAC Prudential Hall in Newark, New Jersey... with KC Concepcion and a very special guest. For online tickets, visit [www.mpgglobalproductions.com](http://www.mpgglobalproductions.com), [www.ticketonline.com](http://www.ticketonline.com) and [www.pinoyticket.com](http://www.pinoyticket.com)

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