

Queens residents celebrate RP Independence Day

by MARK YANCY GANDIONCO

FILIPINOS in New York City, especially those in Queens, said they are happy that a community-wide celebration of Philippine Independence Day will be held in Queens for the first time.

"It is about time that the Filipino community come together in Queens since this is where most of us (Filipinos) live," said Peter Arvin Jabido, who lives in Woodside. "I don't have to travel far, since I only have to walk a few blocks."

The First Annual Bayanihan Cultural Festival will be held on June 21 at the Hart Playground on 69th St. and 37th Avenue in Woodside, New York. The whole-day festival will feature cultural and musical performances by Filipino American artists, a flea market for Philippine products, native food and delicacies, children's arts and craft, free health screening and free legal (immigration) consultation.

Queens is home to the largest population of Filipino-American citizens in New York City. "There is no better place to celebrate Philippine Independence Day in New York than here in Queens," said Julia Camagong, co-executive director of the Philippine Forum, organizer of the festival.

With the theme, "Building community, celebrating diversity, and forging solidarity", it aims to celebrate the Filipino Bayanihan Spirit, celebrate Filipino heritage and introduce Filipino culture to the larger immigrant community in Queens.

So far, the festival, sponsored by Jollibee and Western Union, has drawn Filipino performers from all over the US.

Among the individual and group performers who have signed up to perform at the festival are Deep Foundation, BIBAK NE, Kinding Sindaw, Blue Sholars, Kadena, John Flor, Paaralang Pilipino, Pinoys of Hunter (POH), Filipinas for Rights and Empowerment (FIRE) cultural collective, Kabalikat Domestic Support Network, 3421 Band, Young Educators for Health and Empowerment of the Youth (YEHEY), Stonybrook University PUSO, Taospuso, Andrele Suarez, Paul Riego and many more.

"Another thing I'm excited about, besides the free services that would be given during the festival, are the cultural performers. It is refreshing to watch Filipino performers here in the US." Said Jabido of Woodside.

For its part, Deep Foundation, a new hip hop sensation in the New York/ New Jersey area, said they are happy to be performing in front of their kababayans on Independence Day.

"This event is for both the Filipino and Queens' community. As proud Filipinos and Queens residents, we are honored to represent both in this festival." the group said in a statement.

Rey Agudana, a nurse and a father of two, said he would definitely bring his children to the festival.

"June 21st is Father's Day. This will be a great occasion to where I could bring my children for the day. They are still too young to give me gifts or make me breakfast in bed. For now, taking them to the Filipino festival where they will know their roots is my way of building their character and future. And I know, when they are all grown up, they would thank me for that. Now that makes a great and meaningful Father's Day celebration." Agudana said.

This festival is organized by the Philippine Forum, a local organization that aims to foster a greater understanding of the Filipino Americans' roots, rights and responsibilities, and the Bayanihan Filipino Community Center.

The term "Bayanihan" refers to a Filipino custom of community integration with a focus on recognizing one's identity and cooperating towards a common goal. Bayanihan refers not only to the individual Filipino's integration with his community but also the whole Filipino community's integration with the greater multicultural backdrop of New York City.

For more information, contact the organizers at (718) 565-8862 look for Julia or Cling, You could also email them at Bayanihan.festival@gmail.com or visit the Bayanihan Filipino Community Center at 40-21 69th Street, Woodside, New York City. ■

THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

June 21 | Sunday

FIRST ANNUAL BAYANIHAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL

The first ever celebration of Philippine Independence Day in the heart of the Filipino community in Queens, New York will feature Filipino American artists who will perform indigenous, folk and contemporary songs, dances and spoken word. Among the performers are Blue Scholars, BIBAK, Deep Foundation, Paaralang Pilipino, Paul the Magician, and more.

Take the G,V,R trains to 65th St. or 7 train to 69th St./Fisk Ave. and walk north on 69th St.

The festival also features a basketball exhibition, children's corner with Filipino games, story-telling, and face painting, free health screening and free legal and immigration consultations, arts and crafts bazaar, and community organizations.

The whole-day festival on June 21 at the Hart Playground in Elmhurst, Queens (37th Avenue and 69th Street), 10am - 6pm, is sponsored by Philippine Forum and the Bayanihan Filipino Community Center. Other sponsors are Jollibee, Western Union, Manila Gorilla and RCN. For more information, please call (718) 565-8862 or e-mail filipinocenter@yahoo.com.

Filipino Fathers Celebrate Their Day at the Bayanihan Cultural Festival

Everyone is invited to bring the whole family to the 1st Bayanihan Cultural Festival at the Hart Playground on 69th St. and 37th Ave. Woodside, NY.

For more information, contact Julia or Cling at (718) 565-8862 or e-mail: Bayanihan.festival@gmail.com.

June 23 | Tuesday

Society of Philippine American Artists 16th Annual Exhibit Reception

SPAA invites you for the 16th Annual Exhibit Reception to be held at Philippine Center, 556 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10036 at 6:30pm. This will be the Launching of Manuel Rodriguez, Sr. into the threshold. A book on SPAA's founder

and president emeritus. The Reception is by invitation.

Suggested \$5 donation supports SPAA projects. RSVP by June 9 at spaausa@gmail.com or Athena at (973) 652-5798.

June 25 | Thursday

Collaborative Opportunities for Raising Empowerment, Inc. (CORE) Fifth Installment of its Signature Speaker Series

CORE will hold its fifth installment of its signature series program at the Asian Cultural Center (15 East 40th Street 2nd Floor between 5th Ave. and Madison), 6:30pm. This year they will present two Speaker Series events, in line with the organization's 2009 strategy: Collaboration and Empowerment through Engagement and Education. This year's theme is Education. For more info. Contact admin@core-nyc.org and visit: http://core-nyc.org/speakerseries2009.html.

June 28 | Sunday

Phil-Am Friendship Day Parade and Street Fair

The Philippine American Friendship Committee (PAFCOM) is celebrating its 19th Phil-Am Friendship Day from 8am-7pm in Jersey City. The parade starts at the Plaza Rizal located at the corner of Brunswick St. and Columbus Drive. The Festival will showcase Philippine culture and traditions. Booths are located at the Exchange Place Plaza. For more info. Contact Paul Verzosa, parade chairperson (908) 764-9011/(908) 688-7667, Hector Magno- 2009 Overall chair (908) 229-0155, Lorie Lizardo MD-2009 Grand Marshal (973) 678-7445.

August 8 | Saturday

1st Peoples' Ball

Simbang Gabi Sa Katedral, Inc. and Special Edition Press, Inc. presents, a dinner-dance fundraising event to benefit SGSK is slated to take place at the Sheraton Meadowlands Hotel in Rutherford, New Jersey by way of a People's Ball at 7pm.

Please email editor@asianjournalinc.com or call (212) 655-5426 for your community events for possible publication.

Filipino fathers celebrate their day at the Bayanihan Cultural Festival

FILIPINOS in New York City, especially those in Queens, said they are happy that a community-wide celebration of Philippine Independence Day will be held in Queens for the first time. Among them are Filipino Fathers who plan to take their family to the First Bayanihan Cultural Festival Queens. It will take place at the Hart Playground on 69th St. and 37th Avenue in Woodside, New York this Sunday.

The whole-day festival, sponsored by Jollibee, Census 2010, Filipino Times, Western Union, RCN and Manila Gorilla, will feature cultural and musical performances by Filipino American artists, a flea market for Philippine products, native food and delicacies, children's arts and craft, free health screening and free legal (immigration) consultation.

Among the individual and group performers who have signed up to perform at the festival are Deep Foundation, BIBAK NE, Kinding Sindaw, Blue Sholars, Kadena, John Flor, Paaralang Pilipino, Pinoys of Hunter (POH), Filipinas for

Rights and Empowerment (FIRE) cultural collective, Kabalikat Domestic Support Network, 3421 Band, Young Educators for Health and Empowerment of the Youth (YEHEY), Stonybrook University PUSO, Taospuso, Andrele Suarez, Paul Riego and many more.

"Building community, celebrating diversity, and forging solidarity", it aims to celebrate the Filipino Bayanihan Spirit, celebrate Filipino heritage and introduce Filipino culture to the larger immigrant community in Queens. "There is no better place to celebrate Father's Day and Philippine Independence Day in New York than here in Queens," said Julia Camagong, co-executive director of the Philippine Forum, organizer of the festival.

For more information, contact the organizers at (718) 565-8862 look for Julia or Cling, You could also email them at Bayanihan.festival@gmail.com or visit the Bayanihan Filipino Community Center at 40-21 69th Street, Woodside, New York City. ■

Consulate opens 'Sonata' tribute to Fil-Vets

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Consul General Cecile Rebong delivers her remarks at the opening ceremony, presenting participating photographers of 'Sonata'.

Thomeczek, with exhibit director Rene Ner and event and research manager Robert Perez De Tagle, coordinating among the photographers in the USA and Manila, and with locally-based veterans in NY and NJ.

Fortunately, several veterans were able to view the exhibit personally on Sunday, June 7, with Philippine VP Noli de Castro and Sen. Manny Villar, and at the opening on June 8. Veterans in the NY and NJ area include Antonio Baquiran, Pablo Barros, Nicomedes Casiño, Walter Casingal, Alfredo Diaz, Jose Genito, Jose Red, Espiridon Villanueva, Jr., Aldegundo Adlaon, Arsenio Albero, Alejandro Capus, Judge Rafael P. De Peralta, Santiago Hipolito, Gervacio Deyro, Sofronio Gajo, Jorge Gomez, Pastor Justimbaste, Jr., Mario Lumida, Elpidio Ramos, Vicente Restauero, Cornelio Santos, Basilio Senol, Dr. Feliciano Simpao, Serafin Talion, Pacifico Timbol, Leonardo Velasco.

Also featured in the exhibit and in attendance were Leonor de Vera (daughter of the recently deceased Mila De Vera), Labida Antonio (widow of Crisanto Antonio), and Amada Umali (widow of Alberto Umali), along with Loretta Casiño, wife of the violin aficionado Nic Casiño who was highlighted in the photo by Mae Palaci.

For more information, contact Mr. De Tagle, (201) 434-1964 or e-mail ArtempoNY@gmail.com or Ms. Dimaculangan, (212) 764-1330 or e-mail philconsulateny@mindspring.com. ■

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