

THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

September 11 | Friday
Novena Masses for the Feast of San Lorenzo Ruiz
 There will be novena masses for the Feast of San Lorenzo Ruiz from September 11-19 at 6:30pm, Chapel of San Lorenzo Ruiz (378 Broome St., NYC 10013).

September 13 | Sunday
Phil. Chamber Rondalla Presents 'Kuwerdanza'
 The Philippine Chamber Rondalla of New Jersey, Inc. invites the public to "Kuwerdanza", its gala concert to be held on Sunday, September 13, 3pm at the auditorium of St. Andrew Catholic Church in Avenel, NJ. Tickets: \$15 (advance); \$20 (door). For more info. contact: (908)359-3297 or email: PhilChamberRondalla@yahoo.com. Also visit website: http://PhilChamberRondalla.multiply.com

Kundiman and Verlaine Reading Series
 After a summer's hiatus, the Kundiman & Verlaine reading series is back! We have another fantastic reading in store; and this one is extra special because

it is our Kundiman fellows/alumni reading! Hope all of you can come and support our readers and community. Come & hear beautiful poetry, libate, and mingle with one of the friendliest & cute Kundiman & Verlaine present readings by: Ching-In Chen, Dulani, Mika Nagasaki, & Neil Aitken. September 13, 4pm -Verlaine located at 110 Rivington (b/w Ludlow & Essex) NY. \$5 dollars donation.

September 19 | Saturday
Testimonial Dinner
 Everyone is invited to attend a testimonial dinner, an evening with Most Reverend Oscar A. Solis, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, California. Main Celebrant and Homilist on September 20, 2009. Join us on September 19, 6-10pm at East Manor (79-19 Albion Ave. Elmhurst, NY 11373). Donation: \$50. For more information please Contact: (718) 803-1111.

September 20 | Saturday
San Lorenzo Ruiz Feast Day
 Join us as we celebrate the Feast Day of San Lorenzo Ruiz at 2pm at 378 Broome St. NYC 10013. Attire: Filipiniana for outdoor celebration.

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

The Voice of FilAmerica

Political empowerment is still a treasure that eludes us as a community here in America. While we are the second largest Asian American community in the United States, we have yet to harvest the power that comes from our numbers. The Voice of FilAmerica features elected and appointed officials—regardless of political affiliation—in the different US states who are of Filipino ancestry. As your Filipino American community newspaper, the Asian Journal recognizes the fact that we all have a responsibility towards bringing political empowerment to fruition, especially for our future generations. It is our hope to have our voices heard all over America.

Nestor Garcia, Hawaii City Councilman

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
 AJPress

AS a local boy growing up in Waipahu, Hawaii, Fil-Am Nestor Garcia has always felt a unique sense of pride and responsibility to give back to the community that made him who he is today.

It's a reason that when he was given the chance to work as a public servant; he put himself in a leadership position.

Garcia, a Democrat, is a Honolulu, Hawaii City Councilman. He represents District 9 serving the communities of Waikale, Waipahu, Village Park, Makakilo, Kunia, and Mililani Town.

Garcia is an Officer of the Council, serving as Vice-Chair. He also serves as the current Chair of the Budget Committee.

During his six years on the Council, he chaired the Transportation committee for four-and-a-half years, and the Parks Committee for a year-and-a-half. During the time he chaired the Transportation committee, he also served alternately, as Chair and Vice Chair of the

Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OMPO), according to the Honolulu City Council page.

Prior to becoming a councilmember, Garcia served in the State House of Representatives for eight years, and worked in Washington as press secretary for Hawaii's senior senator Daniel Inouye. He has also worked as a reporter for a local Hawaii TV station KHON Fox 2 for ten years and served as a bank executive and sits on the board of several non-profit organizations.

He graduated from the University of Hawaii, receiving his bachelor's degree in Journalism in 1980.

Garcia says he's blessed to have the opportunity and privilege to be in a position to help others. ■



How not to dial M for murder

From Page 4

humble heart that thanks God for every moment of life on earth. Our Blessed Mother exemplifies the kind of heart that bears all. That is why she is worthy of emulation. "Thou shalt not kill" is a commandment that holds in good times and in bad. There's no moral relativism on this. Each is precious to God or He wouldn't have sacrificed His own Son if He didn't think we were worth the time and trouble. Each murder is a grievous sin against the Holy Spirit from whom all life comes. It is us who has discounted our own worth.

Part of the reason we have discounted the value of human life is that modern society has become so desensitized to violence and death via the content in films, games and media that pass for entertainment these days, that we take life for granted as though it means nothing. Add to that is the easy access to the cheap killing machines, guns that only the very sane, the very mature and the upright should be given the license to own. If the strictest of standards for gun ownership were really enforced, maybe only a tiny percent of the population can own guns.

Does hell exist? How is punishment meted out in the afterlife? In the physical universe, scientists claim that there are black holes in the known universe that can't be seen by human eyes but with gravitation so strong that it sucks, as in a whirling cosmic cauldron stirred by mighty forces, all the stars and planetary systems that come within its orbit, so strong that not even light can escape. Need a visual image for hell aside from Dante's Inferno? Black holes could fit the bill as a repository for lost souls, a cold, dark, fetid, state of gnawing pain and bitter regret, filled with the piercing screams of the damned, without the presence of God for all eternity, and forever blotted out from all memory except their own.

Is it possible that the morally

bankrupt and depraved, regard the taking of a life as an option when things do not go their way or when the course of their lives hit a snag and overweening pride tells them to end it all, instead of getting down on their knees to pray to the God of their beings for the humility, the courage and the strength to endure? Gone is the fear of God, much less the love of God. As we steer farther and farther away from God and place something else in the center of our lives, scenarios of helplessness and despair such as what we are witnessing more frequently these days may be expected to unfold with eerie regularity.

Many of us have become egocentric, overly individualistic, self-absorbed individuals. Perhaps during this period of testing, we would be a lot happier, healthier and less prone to veer towards lives of quiet desperation if we focused less and less on ourselves and more on the welfare of the other person and commit spontaneous, frequent acts of kindness and generosity to family members, total strangers and even those we struggle to love. It would be a tough slog but doable.

There was one telling incident I never quite forgot. Long ago, I was running breathlessly huffing and puffing in my stilettos to drop some coins on a parking meter on Wilshire Boulevard I knew had expired because of a long, drawn-out presentation I was making on the upper floor of a nearby high rise. Fortunately, I narrowly missed getting a thirty-some dollar fine from the parking enforcer because a panhandler had dropped some coins for my car's meter, from his can of coins. It stunned me to see him feeding all the meters that were expiring on that block. Of course, he may have been merely trying to annoy the heck out of the parking enforcer. Who knows? I only saw the kindness in the act. That stayed with me. From then on, I would remember and always

be inspired by the completely anonymous gesture of that person who had practically nothing but still gave of the little he had.

That's when I knew kindness is contagious like the flu.

Nota Bene: Monette Adeva Maglaya is SVP of Asian Journal Publications, Inc. To ask questions, send feedback and requests as well as to inquire about advertising in any or all of the 6 print editions of Asian Journal in California, Nevada and New York/New Jersey and/or advertising in the Print Edition Online of Asian Journal, e-mail monette.maglaya@asianjournalinc.com THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE SENT FEEDBACK THROUGH THE YEARS.

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