

Pass needed for hikers in Makiling

by MARICAR CINCO
Inquirer.net

MANILA—The Makiling Center for Mountain Eco-systems (MCME) said it would promote “responsible hiking” among the climbers of Mount

Makiling this Lent.

The MCME under the University of the Philippines at Los Baños manages the 1,090-meter Makiling that spans several Batangas and Laguna towns.

“About 6,000 to 8,000 hikers and campers are expected this

Holy Week,” said Roberto Cereno, coordinator of the “Make it Makiling,” an ecotourism scheme of MCME since 2002.

But for this year’s Lenten season, “a set of rules and regulations will be implemented to promote responsible hiking and

camping ethics,” Cereno said in a phone interview.

In previous years, there was no strict monitoring and policies implemented to safeguard the mountain, he said.

“We had to bring down tons of garbage (from Makiling) every post-Lenten season,” Cereno said.

Garbage

The volume of garbage collected after every season was drastically reduced to about 100 kilos over the past four years, he added.

Cereno said many of the hikers would gather at Makiling beginning Holy Wednesday, although people would already come in at the start of the week.



Mt. Makiling

Photo from virtualtourist.com

“Only God can close a mountain. What we do is management,” he said.

A pass will be issued to hikers who first need to undergo a briefing about safety trekking tips.

Camping will also be restricted to designated sites and only those with camping gears will be

given permits.

Liquor, dangerous drugs, firearms and cutting tools that can be used to destroy trees and vegetation are prohibited. Littering is also not allowed.

Critical areas will be closed from 3 p.m. to 4 a.m. during Holy Week to prevent night accidents. ■

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QC mayor urges new grads to go into business

MANILA—Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. has urged recent college graduates to try their hand at being entrepreneurs and open up their own businesses.

In a statement addressed to the graduates of the Quezon City Polytechnic University, Belmonte called on the new members of the workforce to take advantage of new enterprises sprouting in the city.

He added that such new businesses would give the graduates opportunities to set up their own or become gainfully employed.

“You could choose to set up even a small business. See what consumers and businesses in Quezon City need, and work to supply that need, using the skills and knowledge that you have been equipped with,” Belmonte said.

The city mayor pointed out that the courses in QCPU, such as Information and Communications Technology, Industrial Engineering, and Entrepreneurial Management, were carefully chosen to “best respond to real and emerging demands both here and abroad.”

The QCPU recently held its commencement exercises with 258 graduates joining the workforce.

Belmonte noted students can

also take advantage of other IT-related fields such as finance and business, software development, hardware maintenance and upgrading, website services, accounting, logistics, human resource management services, research, engineering, and architecture.

The QCPU is the only city-run and managed tertiary educational institution, which has its main campus in the village of San Bartolome and two satellite campuses in the villages of Sto. Cristo and Batasan Hills.

Aside from the 258 graduates in regular courses, around 335 students also finished short term vocational courses such as refrigeration and airconditioning mechanic, computer technician, electronics mechanic, industrial electrician, and metal casting. (Inquirer.net)

RP group searches for ‘unsung women heroes’

TACLOBAN CITY—The Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region is set to launch the annual search for the “Unsung Women Heroes Awards” which aims to honor fourteen ordinary women from the grassroots and disadvantaged sectors who whole-heartedly gave their services to uplift the lives and well being of other women and girls in their communities.

The “Unsung Women Heroes Awards” is the local counterpart of “Making a Difference for Women Awards” sponsored by Soroptimist International of Americas open to international nominations by Soroptimist clubs all over the world.

Bulacan Rep. Lorna C. Silverio, Chair of the Awards Committee, said “unlike its international counterpart, which targets the already empowered women, this local counterpart will focus on women from the barangay level who are less privileged but struggled anyway to help her community.”

This is aimed at inspiring ordinary women who still have doubts that they can make a difference in this world despite their economic conditions.

Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region will select outstanding women from the communities who, in their personal capacities, worked for the improvement of the living condition of indigenous groups, poverty alleviation, protection and education of children and women, and in advancing women’s political participation in their communities.

“Unsung Women Heroes Awards” encourage nominations from the grassroots level and the disadvantaged sectors. Those nominated must not be affiliated with formal funding organizations or foundations.

The first batch of honorees who were nominated by individuals and organizations will be presented during the formal launching of the Awards on April 16, 2009, Thursday, at the Abelardo Hall, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region is part of Soroptimist International, a volunteer service organization for business and professional women who are committed to work for the improvement of lives of women and girls.

Soroptimist is an international organization for business and professional women who volunteer their time, talents and resources to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world.

Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region which has 86 clubs and 1,920 members, is an affiliate of Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA). (www.pia.gov.ph)

Lifting of ban on Chip Tsao’s entry to RP recommended

by PIA LEE-BRAGO
Philstar.com

FILIPINO diplomats are apparently ready to forgive controversial Hong Kong columnist Chip Tsao by lifting the ban on the Chinese writer’s entry to the Philippines, after he earlier described the country as a “nation of servants.”

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson J. Eduardo Malaya said lifting of the ban on the entry to the Philippines of Tsao, a writer of *HK Magazine*, was recommended by the Philippine Consulate General in Hong Kong after he issued a public apology and personally went to the consulate to convey his “most sincere” apologies for branding the Philippines a nation of servants due to the many Filipino domestic helpers working in the territory.

Tsao indicated his interest to visit the country during his visit to the consulate last April 1.

The Filipino community in Hong Kong pushed through with the protest on Sunday against the racist column of Tsao.

The United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL-MIGRANTE-HK) said the rally was against racist write-up as the group also sought to resolve the roots of racism and discrimination against OFWs.

The UNIFIL-MIGRANTE-HK said the protest action should send a “loud and clear message” that Filipinos, especially domestic helpers, will not take racial slurs and class discrimination sitting down.

Tsao issued a public apology but he was quick in justifying his use of the word servant as “sacred,” saying people are all servants of God. ■

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