

By Ms. Lour M. Ceballos

The saga of the heroism of Filipino and American veterans of World War II will see significant development for posterity and future journalistic historical records when Pearl Harbor Day is commemorated on December 8 by Chicago Fil-Am media.

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Sixty-six years after World War II exploded in the Far East, when Filipino forces were harnessed to defend the United States following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and Clark Field in the Philippines, Pearl Harbor Day will be commemorated on December 8, by the National Press Club Philippines-USA as host in a "kapehan" or coffee klatch. The conversation at this social get-together will serve to document the opinions of the participants on the historic, cultural and educational role of Filipino veterans and their families during the War. It is also a Christmas party, and lots of donors will present them with Christmas gifts, said Club President Yoly T. Tubalinal. This coffee time casual conversation will be held on Saturday at the American Legion Memorial Civic Center, 6140 Dempster Street, Morton Grove, Illinois, from 9 o'clock to 12 noon. This observance in the time zone of the Philippines occurs on December 8, a day ahead of that in the U.S. where Pearl Harbor Day, also called Remembrance Day, is marked on December 7. A brief informative flyer will be distributed at the Kapehan in recollection of the momentous outbreak of the Pacific War that not only changed the course of history of the world, but at the same time placed both Pearl Harbor and Clark Field in a joint and equal claim to historical recognition. following to

Mrs. Remedios C. Cabagnet, president of the Filipino American Grandparents Association of

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Written by Lour M. Ceballos of EasiMedia News

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Chicago (FAGPAC) is in charge of inviting her members and the veterans, as well as distributing the flyers in places where the FAGPAC holds weekly meetings.

Jerry Clarito, a commissioner of the Skokie Park District, laments that the "beteranos" are still seeking justice. Telling their story in a celebratory, factual and educational manner without political undertones is what we wish to achieve, says Yoly.

The flyer will trace how the epic proportions of the Filipino veterans, starting from Pearl Harbor & Clark Field Day, through the Bataan Death March and now the struggle to reach out to Congress at Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. unfolds through the media, unfolding as news, columns, editorials, feature stories and more, toward writings that will one day be about legendary heroes.

Following the invasion of the Japanese as the year 1941 ended, the U.S. and Filipino forces surrendered, but as Gen. Douglas MacArthur was leaving Bataan and Corregidor, he made a promise: "I shall return." That promise was kept when U.S. forces, landed in Leyte in October 1944 to "liberate" the Philippines. The war ended in 1945. But on February 18, 1946, just before granting independence to the Philippines, the U.S. Congress passed the Rescission Act that revoked the Filipino soldiers' status as U.S. veterans. Today, sixty-six years after "Pearl Harbor & Clark Field Day," the Filipino veterans are still praying that the U.S. Congress would pass the Equity Bill for their pensions and the Filipino Family Reunification Bill that offers to bring the families of Filipino American veterans quickly to the U.S. as legitimate immigrants.

There are only 18,000 living Filipino veterans out of the original about 200,000. Many of them are in their 80s. Their lives have touched their parents, and now their children and grandchildren, providing Filipino and military media a wealth in the war time experiences of people and nations for future journalistic reference.

The sponsors of the "Kapehan" collaborate with the media in raising public awareness of current events. Their cooperation encourages more active community participation in media, preserving calendar dates that place the Philippines on the global map. The following organizations are among the sponsors:

National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA-Illinois Chapter), headed by Dr.

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Evelyn De Asis Natividad; the CARE (Chicago Angklung & Rondalla Ensemble); KM Oriental/Alternative Nursing Services, Ltd./Alternate Care, Inc.; United Home Care Inc. of Illinois (c/o Ms. Judy Agno); JC Management, LIC ; Dunkin Donuts on Addison Street, Chicago; Dr. Noel and Mrs. Annabel Lasala; Dr. Bernardo and Mrs. Lourdes Livas; and the Unlimited Agency managed by Mr. Jun Delfin); and the Bagumbayan Association in America, Inc. and the Bagumbayan Credit Union, Inc.

The invitation to partner with NPC Phil.-USA Kapehan in its mission to bring news closer to the of is being extended to other groups, among them the following: the American United Military Society of Great Lakes, Alliance of Filipino Americans, Inc. (AFAI), Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment (AFIRE), Illinois Veterans Equity Center (IVEC), National Alliance for Filipino Veterans Equity (NaFVE), Philippine Week Committee (PWC), Bagumbayan Association in America, as well as the Bagumbayan Credit Union.

Coffee and donuts will be served before lunch. For more information please telephone: 847-915-2781 or email filammegascene@aol.com

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