

By JOSEPH G. LARIOSA

*(Journal Group Link International)*

## **Filipino-American Groups Mark Philippine-Independence Week from California to New York's Island of Manhattan**

CHICAGO (*JGLi*) – As Chicago Filipinos held a motorcade, New York Filipinos kicked off with their annual grand parade as Filipino Americans mark this week the 112th Philippine Independence Day across the United States.

In Kensington, Maryland, the Philippine Embassy and the Philippine American Foundation for Charities, Inc., presented Simbuyo 2010 last Saturday (June 5), commemorating Philippine Independence and celebrating Filipino Artistry at the Great Hall, Visitors Center, Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints, according to Bing Branigin.

The KKK (Kasarinlan, Kamalayan, Kasuotan) featured All Saints Fil Am Ministry of Manassas, Virginia; Dr. Joel Ang and Sidney Boquiren, violin and piano; Allan Chan, tenor; FACC Angklung Ensemble, Tony Lambino and Butch Arroyo, Genieve Llames, piano, The Singing Diplomats, Young Adults Choir of St. Columba and Jason Ignacio, award winning dancer and choreographer, with works of Alfonso "Boy" Guinoo, Mindanao Fashion czar.

Meanwhile, newscaster Gel Santos Relos will headline the 5th Annual People's Ball of the Migrant Heritage Commission on June 26 (Saturday) at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington

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D.C.

, according to  
MHC

co-executive director Arnedo S. Valera. The cultural entertainment, featuring Armonia Latina and DJ Jojo, starts from

5:30 p.m.

and lasts until

12:30 a.m.

Interested parties may R.S.V.P by calling 202-631-8856 / 703-273-1196 / 202-247-0117 or by emailing

[migrantheritage@gmail.com](mailto:migrantheritage@gmail.com)

or visiting its website at

[www.migrantheritage.org](http://www.migrantheritage.org)

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## **Celebrations in Chicago**

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In a message, newly posted Consul General Leo M. Herrera-Lim in Chicago challenged the Filipino Americans in the Midwest

to “work together to maintain a strong Filipino American community. Let us renew the drive for national development with a determination that peace, prosperity and continued progress will touch the life of every Filipino.”

In her farewell message for this year’s theme: Kalayaan 2010: Tagumpay ng Bayan released by the Philippine Consulate, outgoing President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo thanked “Overseas Filipinos, for your demonstrated commitment to help uphold, protect and promote our Filipino heritage. I am confident that you will continue to do your part in contributing to the full development of your motherland.”

At least two of four groups celebrating Philippine Independence event in Chicago came together to start a motorcade in the morning last Sunday (June 6) from Lake Shore Drive and Foster Avenue moving westward to Labagh Woods Forest Preserve, where the community members held a picnic.

There, they attended mass, held inter-faith vesper service as not all participants are Catholics, presented some entertainment, including SDA Singing Group, line dancing, raffle & giveaways, sporting events and networking. There were also some booths, featuring the 10th anniversary of Pinoy Newsmagazine, birthday and wedding anniversary celebration of Pinoy’s publisher, Anong Santos; and the launching of Knights of Rizal Celebration of the 150th birthday of National Hero Dr. Jose Rizal on June 19.

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On Friday, June 11, a huge Philippine flag will be unfurled and raised at the Daley Plaza in downtown Chicago

At night, Kalayaan's executive chairperson Ronnie Cascolan will host a coronation and gala dinner ball at the Grand Ball of Hyatt Regency O'Hare at Rosemont, Illinois.

The following night, Saturday, June 12, Philippine Independence Week Committee (PIWC) executive chair Joy Manuel will host a coronation and gala dinner ball also at the Grand Ballroom of Hyatt Regency O'Hare at Rosemont. It will feature Beauty Queen chair, Cora Gumila's Mrs. Philippines PIWC '10, Eden Olarte; Little Miss Illinois, Serena Escalona; Miss Illinois, Sarah Crisostomo; Mrs. Illinois, Mayumi Hammer; Miss Chicago, Kayvee Divinagracia; Mrs. Chicago, Nelida Jayme.

Also on Saturday, June 12, Filipino American Council of Greater Chicago's Kasarinlan will hold in the Rizal Center in Chicago the showing of the "Pearl of the Orient Seas" video from the Philippine Department of Tourism in Chicago, showcasing and promoting the beauty of the Philippines; presentation of musical talents by young Filipino Americans; art exhibit by local Filipino painters and artists; exhibits of Philippine artifacts donated by an American, who lived in the Philippines for many years, and a masterful exhibit of wit and talent called "Balagtas" (poetic debate) written by prominent members of the Filipino community.

### Celebrations in New York City

Meanwhile, in New York City, over 150 Filipino-American and immigrant members of the National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (NAFCON) and other organizations turned the 112th Philippine Independence into a march for social justice as they pounded the streets of New York City last June 6, Sunday afternoon. They also demanded genuine change for Filipinos in the Philippines

NAFCON said it participated in the Philippine Independence Day Parade with thousands of other Filipinos, not only to celebrate the independence of the Philippines from Spain, but also to raise awareness on the current situation of Filipinos in the Philippines and in the U.S.

With the ongoing political corruption in the Philippines, and over 1,000 extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of activists since Arroyo took office; in addition to degrading immigration laws that would criminalize immigrants in Arizona and a possible immigration reform bill that would demand national identification and/or a biometric system has characterized the current state of why Filipinos organizing and taking to the streets against such corruption and oppressive laws is necessary at this point of time.

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During the parade, member and allied organizations of NAFCON including Philippine Forum New York, Philippine Forum New Jersey, KABALIKAT: Domestic Workers' Support Network, Kappa Pi (Kapatirang Pilipino) Fraternity, Young Educators for Health and Empowerment of the Youth (YEHEY), American Pinoy Organization of the Youth (APOY of the Hudson Community College), the Sentosa 27++ nurses, Anakbayan NY/NJ, Filipinas for Rights and Empowerment (FiRE) and New York Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines (NYCHRP), chanted in unity, "Pagbabago! Ipatupad! Tunay na Repormang Agraryo! Ipatupad (Change! Enforce it! Genuine Land Reform! Enforce it!)", "We are people! We are not illegal!", "Shut Sentosa! Shut down Sentosa Now!" and "Prosecute, prosecute, GMA! Singilin, singilin, pagbayarin! (Charge her, charge her, let her pay!)"

Even if there was a variety of issues in the community, the member organizations of NAFCON marched and united together against these problems. Their joint solidarity was symbolically represented with a "Bahay Kubo" on the backs of different members of different organizations to show the Bayanihan spirit—when community members come together to help out in the worst of times. Behind the *bahay kubo* is the sun symbolizing the Filipinos' vision for change within the Philippine government with the ushering in of the new leadership. Other props were produced such as the mascot of the outgoing Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo wearing an orange prisoner's shirt and handcuffs by the youth of Anakbayan New York/New Jersey.

"At a time when Noynoy Aquino, the son of President Cory Aquino, is the new president, genuine agrarian reform is due and needs to happen. As Filipinos abroad, we must also stay vigilant against such laws like Arizona's SB1070 that will legalize racial profiling and continue to police our communities. We must take a stand before it gets worse," said Rico Foz, NAFCON executive vice president.

## **Fil-Am Groups Mark Philippine-Independence Week - MabuhayRadio**

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*Kababayans* (fellow Filipinos) who watched the parade cheered, raised fists and chanted along with the NAFCON contingent and the two other major Filipino alliances with member organizations all over the US – BAYAN USA and GABRIELA USA – as they marched through Madison Avenue.

Additional information, as provided by the MabuhayRadio.com News Service:

### **Philippine-Independence Day Events in California:**

#### **I. Philippine Independence Day at the Los Angeles City Hall**

Place: Los Angeles City Hall

City Council Chambers & Forecourt, 200 North Springs

St., LA, CA 90014

Date: Friday, June 11, 2010

Time: 10:00am - 3:30pm

Host: The Los Angeles Filipino Association of City Employees (LAFACE)

Attire: Filipiniana

Costs: Free entrance. Free lunch. Everyone is invited.

Contact: According to Cora Aragon Soriano, please email [alex.banares@lacity.org](mailto:alex.banares@lacity.org) for free parking arrangements.

**Activities:**

- Proclamation by the LA City Council of Philippine Independence Day at the Council Chambers, LA City Hall, 3rd Floor ( 10:00 am)
  
- Reception and Entertainment at the LA City Hall Forecourt. Lunch will be provided. (11:30 am to 1:00 pm )
  
- Vendor's Showcase (10 am to 3:30pm)

**II. Philippine Independence Gala Dinner and Ball**

Theme: "Celebrating Freedom through Culture and Arts"

Place: Hilton Hotel at the Los Angeles Airport

Date: June 12, 2010

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Host: The Kalayaan 2010 Planning Committee,

as chaired by Gil Mislang

Attire: Filipino formal wear, Barongs for men and Terno na Saya, Sarongs and Maria Clara-styled evening gowns for women.

Costs: Requires ticket at \$60 per head

Contact(s): For tickets and/or other inquiries: Gil Mislang, (323) 286-2121; Josie E. De Jesus, (714) 272-0300; Trini Foliente, (909) 226-3271; Bing de la Vega (661) 468-0497.



Additional Features: The event will feature local Filipino pop singers Mon David, Louie Reyes, Paco Arespachaga, Miguel Vera, Angeline, Gelo Francisco, violinist Andy Tecson and pianist Juliet Posadas. Music by the Midnight Motion Band and emceed by Shiela Ferrari, a former Miss Philippines and actress in Miss Saigon. Guest speaker will be Filipino American Corey Calaycay, a councilman of the City of Claremont, who will be introduced by Vice Consul General Daniel Espiritu.

### **III. 2010 Heritage Day at San Gabriel Valley**

Date: Sunday, June 13, 2010

Place: West Covina and Azusa, California

Host: Filipino American Chamber of Commerce-San Gabriel Valley

Attire: Preferably Filipiniana

Costs: Not indicated but everyone invited. Fellowship lunch after the program..

Contact: Johnny Chua, johnchua@earthlink.net

#### Activities:

- 1) Free health screening in front of the Seafoodcity Market [Amar and Azusa], West Covina
- 2) Program starts at 11:00 am with a Special Sunday Service, "FREEDOM CRY," describing the birth of Filipino Revolution. To be held at the Gospel Life Community Center, 18901 E. Amar Rd., Walnut, CA 91789

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**IV. □□□□ Filipiniana at Union Square Philippine Independence Day Gala, San Francisco**

Place: Union Square, San Francisco

Date: Saturday, June 12

Time: Program is from 1:30 to 4:00 pm

Host: The San Francisco Filipino community in association with West Bay Pilipino

Multi-Service and the Filipino WWII Veterans Memorial Library and Museum

Attire: Filipiniana

Costs: Free entrance

Contact(s): Rudy Asercion, Yolanda Stern, Rodel Rodis, and Dennis Normandy are members of the Philippine American War Centennial Committee. For more information please call up (415) 724-0641.

Additional Features: The Filipiniana at Union Square Philippine Independence Day Gala is a major celebration by the Filipino community of the San Francisco Bay Area to create awareness of the Philippine culture and for many Americans of Filipino descent to rekindle their roots and heritage and to raise funds for charity projects.

Activities: The celebration will start with an opening reception and unveiling of the Dewey Monument Plaque at 1:30pm. It portrays the struggles in the Philippines after Commodore Dewey victory in Manila

Bay

and the taking possession of the islands by the U.S.

To follow will be performances including that of soprano Stephanie Reese, tenor Dr. Tito Yusi, The Singing Priests, the FilVet Rondalla and other surprise guest appearances.

## **V. A Philippine Independence Day Offering**

### **Pakaraguian Music and Dances of Southern Philippines**

Place: Neurosciences Institute Auditorium  
10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive  
San Diego, CA 92121

Date: Saturday, June 12, 2010

Time: 7:00 PM

Host: Sponsored by the Center for World Music

Attire: Preferably Filipiniana

Contact(s): For information, please call - (619) 470-6024; or e-mail [SamahanPhilDance@gmail.com](mailto:SamahanPhilDance@gmail.com)

Additional Features: Mini concert featuring the traditional culture of Mindanao to be performed by the Samahan Pakaraguian Kulintang Ensemble & Samahan dancers. Generously underwritten by the Neurosciences Institute as part of the program, "Performing Arts at the Neurosciences Institute", a series of cultural events presented as a community service to support the arts in San Diego County and to underscore the special relationship between the arts and the brain. For more details, please go to:  
<http://www.samahanphilippinedance.com/>

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