

Written by Bobby Reyes

Tuesday, 10 February 2009 02:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 10 February 2009 02:42

As visiting Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero came in approximately 65-minute late for the reception at the Philippine Village (PV), the leaders of the host organization decided to go ahead with the program that was billed to start at 10:00 a.m. The host United Bicolandia-Los Angeles (UBLA) asked Philippine Consul General Mary Jo Bernardo Aragon to address the motley crowd while waiting for Senator Escudero to arrive.

Consul General Aragon engaged the crowd at the PV in a spirited discussion about the ongoing lobby for the Filipino World War II veterans at the United States Congress, the new passport requirement, the Overseas-Absentee Voters' (OAV) Registration system, among other topics. She discussed also the outreach programs of the consulate general, especially the OAV registration drive, as discussed in this article, [Philippine Consulate Bares Outreach Program and OF-Voting Registration in San Diego, NV, AZ and TX](#)

* Did you know that Mrs. Aragon is the first-ever Filipino woman diplomat to be officially nominated and confirmed as consul general of the Philippines for Los Angeles? You can read more about Consul General Aragon's reaching her milestone on Feb. 14, 2007, in this article, [New Filipino Consul General in Los Angeles](#)

. Yes, she was President Gloria M. Arroyo's Valentine's gift in 2007 to the Filipino-American communities of Southern California, Southern Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Instead of sending chocolates, the Philippine President decided to send a Filipino rose, who apparently does not like the "late" part of the cacao-laced candies.

* Did you know that Consul General Aragon also made history at the Dodgers Stadium? Here are the articles about her historic feat: [Batting for "Filipino Immortality" at Dodgers Stadium](#) and [Consul General Aragon Makes History at the Fil-Am Day at Dodgers Stadium \(Now With](#)

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[Photo\)](#)

* Speaking of “Filipino Time,” which Senator Escudero mentioned also during his speech at the UBLA-sponsored event, did you know that Consul General Aragon has “unofficially” renamed it to “Filipino On-Time”? Mrs. Aragon usually arrives about 30 minutes before the announced opening time. At the Escudero function billed to start at 10:00 a.m., she arrived with her party at 9:20 a.m. or so. She came in with Deputy Consul General Daniel R. Espiritu and Finance Officer Adrian Peran. Yes, Mrs. Aragon sometimes arrives at functions earlier than some of the events’ hosts.

* Did you know that Mr. Espiritu is the first *Oragon* appointed as the Filipino Deputy Consul General in Los Angeles? He hails from Naga City in Camarines Sur. However, some pundits who come from *Ilocoslovakia* (to use the term coined by Filipino literary legend Max V. Soliven), insist that Mr. Espiritu is the first “Bilokano” Deputy Consul General in L.A., as his grandfather was actually from Ilocos Norte, who settled in Naga City. To read more about “Oragons,” please click on this hyperlink: [Filipino Fun Facts \(Part IV\): How Filipinos Named States and Cities. Plus Fables and Fairies](#)

* Did you know that the UBLA is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year? This means that the premiere Bicol association in the United States is just five-years younger than Deputy Consul General Espiritu and Senator Escudero. Incidentally, Mr. Espiritu is the youngest Filipino ever appointed as Deputy Consul General in Los Angeles – that is, to our limited knowledge. This means also that the UBLA is just younger by four years than its new president, Zeny Sabocor.

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* And speaking again of Senator Escudero, did you know that he arrived at the UBLA function casually dressed (in jeans, T-shirt and jacket)? However, his *tocayo* in the Philippine Senate, Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan, attended Filipino functions in Los Angeles in 2005 and 2007 smartly dressed always in coat and tie. Some members of the “Friends of Kiko Pangilinan” (FKP) say that their favorite senator appears always finely-and-formally attired, as he gives the dignity and decorum that membership in the Philippine Senate requires.

* Talking of sartorial elegance, Senator Pangilinan bears striking similarities to President Barack Obama in two ways: Both of them appear neat and elegant in coat-and-tie business attires; also President Obama and Senator Pangilinan refuse to wear the Barong Filipino (Barong Tagalog) in the United States. To read about Senator Pangilinan’s preference for the American business attire in the United States, please read this article,

[Kiko, Kikays and Kenkoys Turn Kalayaan 2007 into a Komedya of Errors](#)

* Did you know that Filipino-American supporters of Filipino presidential aspirants have been organizing support groups for their respective candidates? As mentioned earlier, there is now the “FKP” among the backers of Senator Pangilinan. There is also the “Friends of Manny Villar.” However, some Bicolano-American supporters of Senator Villar have called their support group, the “Friends of Manoy Villar.” On the other hand, some Senator Escudero’s supporters, who are working for the California Dairy Industry, call their circle, the “Chiz-whiz-kid Friends of Francis Escudero.”

* Did you know that some Ilocano-American supporters of Senator Villar have organized the

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“Manongs for Manny Villar for President” and the “Manangs for Manny Villar for President”? But these supporters of Senator Villar should learn from the collective experience of then Senator John “Sonny” Osmeña’s supporters in Los Angeles.

* But did you know that in the history of Philippine senatorial politics in the Fil-Am community, the supporters of then candidate John Osmeña became too many that they divided themselves into two groups – for better administration and control? The lady friends of Senator Osmeña called themselves the “Girlfriends of Sonny Osmeña” while his male supporters called their group the “Boyfriends of Sonny Osmeña.” But then an old-timer Cebuano said that dividing Sonny Osmeña’s supporters in Los Angeles according to their sex was not politically-correct, as it smacked of sexism. So the supporters “reinvented” themselves into the “Happy Friends of Sonny Osmeña” and the “Gay Friends of Sonny Osmeña.” Of course, Sonny Osmeña won his senate race and all his supporters—irrespective of race, color or sexual orientation—were all happy, merry, joyful, gay and glad that he did emerge victorious.

By the next installment of this series, we will report on the banter, wit, humor and *chizchat*, oops, chitchat that this reporter gathered while people were waiting for Sen.

Chiz

Escudero to arrive at the Philippine Village for his date with the Bicolano community of Los Angeles.

Abangan ang susunod na kabanata

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(To be continued . . .) # # #

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