

No Holds Barred (Series 083)

By Ike Señeres

A new form of activism is emerging. Tired perhaps of taking to the streets or going up the mountains, activists are now getting involved in government coordinating councils as a way of getting directly involved in governance.

Our Barangay, Inc. (OBI) is now calling on their members nationwide to join the Regional Development Councils (RDCs), Provincial Development Councils (PDCs), Municipal Development Councils (MDCs) and Barangay Development Councils (BDCs).

It's good timing that the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) is now reviving these councils, as instructed by President Noynoy Aquino. OBI Chairman Ms. Elsa Bayani herself is ready to be appointed to the RDC of Region VI.

I wonder why these councils became inactive in the first place. According to the law, the representatives of accredited Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are supposed to be invited to become members of the councils. As active members, they in effect become the watchdogs of the officials who are supposed to be watching over the utilization of the Internal Revenue Allocations (IRAs).

La Salle, Ateneo at Lahat Na (LAAL) is also calling on its members nationwide to join the Regional Management Coordinating Committees (RMCC) of the Department of Interior & Local Government (DILG). These committees are composed of the DILG Regional Directors, and the Regional Directors of the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and the Bureau of Jail Management & Penology (BJMP).

LAAL leader Patrick Pantaleon is now trying to mobilize at least 85 of their members to become active in the 17 RMCCs all over the country, in the hope of assigning at least 5 members to each RMCC. Later on, they will go down to the level of the Provincial Management Coordinating Committees (PMCCs). At that level, they have to mobilize 400 of their members to send at least 5 representatives to the PMCCs of the 80 provinces. This is democracy in action, ordinary people getting involved in governance.

The Citizens Foundation for the Prevention of Crime and Injustice (CFPCI) is also mobilizing to recruit and train paralegals who will volunteer to work with the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) all over the country. PAO is mandated to assign lawyers to more than 3,000 courthouses all over

Watching the Watch Dogs - MabuhayRadio

Written by Ike Señeres

Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:44 - Last Updated Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:57

the country, but they only have less than 1,000 lawyers. Newly appointed CFPCI President Atty. JG Grapilon is coordinating this project with PAO Chief Atty. Persida Acosta, CFPCI Director Mr. Thomas W. Lee and the Sigma Rho Foundation (SRF).

CFPCI, a 30 year old foundation now chaired by Col. Octavio Alvarez is now also looking into the possibility of developing a software application that will put order into the system of assigning pro bono lawyers to serve the needs of indigent clients, using a random raffle system that is similar to the system of selecting jury members in the United States.

Jury-system Proposal for the Philippines

Speaking of the jury system, the Worldwide Filipino Alliance (WFA) led by Atty. Cita Garcia and Atty. Toto Causing is now advocating for the adoption of this system in the Philippines. I am supporting this advocacy, because it seems to be the only way to cure the corruption in the judiciary, now infested by some judges who engage in "justice for sale". I researched on the jury system and I found out that serving in the judiciary as a member of the jury is a democratic right that is similar to the right to vote. It is a duty, but it is also a privilege to serve. Again, this is a case of ordinary citizens getting involved in governance.

{xtypo_quote} **Editor's Note:** To read an earlier article about the proposed introduction of the

Watching the Watch Dogs - MabuhayRadio

Written by Ike Señeres

Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:44 - Last Updated Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:57

jury system in the Philippines, please click on this hyperlink, [Reinventing the Philippine Criminal-justice System](#)

It was Mr. Pantaleon who offered the services of LAAL, COMPACT, 1VOTE and 1Ganap Guardians to DILG Sec. Jesse Robredo, as a way of getting involved in the fight against corruption. These groups are now looking into ways of using cell phone cameras and video recorders to gather evidence against corrupt officials.

Governance is supposed to be a two-way process that involves the government on one hand and the citizens on the other hand, I would like this column to be a medium for reporting what is good and bad in governance, what is right and what is wrong. Send me your tips and comments, we can do this together!

{xtypo_quote} Watch KA IKING LIVE! Saturdays 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 pm in Global News Network (GNN), Channel 21 in Destiny Cable. Email iseneres@yahoo.com or text +639293605140 for local cable listings. Visit www.senseneres.blogspot.com

Watching the Watch Dogs - MabuhayRadio

Written by Ike Señeres

Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:44 - Last Updated Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:57

[Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)