

By Bobby Reyes

Part One of a New Series, “Reinventing the NaFFAA”

{xtypo_quote} The purging of the rest of the NaFFAA KapalMuks has yet to be completed . . . in the court of law and the ‘stolen’ money returned before credibility can be restored for the NaFFAA . . . Your tandem with LOLO Bobby Reyes and your investigative reporting had not been an exercise in futility after all. It resulted in exposés of the shenanigans of the NEOs of NaFFAA-A that are now being looked into by law-enforcement authorities.—Jesse Jose {/xtypo_quote}

Thus, [A Cup O' Kapeng Barako](#) Columnist Jesse Jose of Seattle, Washington, described the recent election of Engr. Ed Navarra as the new national chairman of the National Federation of Filipino-American Associations (NaFFAA). Indeed, community leaders were stunned on hearing that NaFFAA chair Greg “Lagareng Hapon” Macabenta chose not to run for reelection and serve only a single two-year term. The federation’s corrupt controlling clique did not allow also the NaFFAA’s national vice chair, Rozita Lee of Las Vegas

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, to run for the top plum. She was being groomed since 2006 to become eventually the national chair of the NaFFAA – after Mr. Macabenta would have served at least two terms.

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Editor’s Notes: To read two articles about the No. 20, 2010, NaFFAA elections in San Francisco, CA, please read Romy Marquez’s [Why the “NaFFAA Is Operating on Empty and in Survival Mode,” to Quote the Words of Outgoing National Chair Gregorio Macabenta](#) and Joseph Lariosa’s [New NaFFAA National Chair Presses for Benefits of Veterans’ Widows](#)

In fact, the ruling clique fixed the election for the national vice-chair position in the September 2006 NaFFAA convention in Honolulu, Hawaii. Ms. Rozita Lee “defeated” Ed Navarra by two votes in a “Lutong Macao” election.

The recent national convention of the NaFFAA in San Francisco, CA, from Nov. 19-21, 2010, had really unwritten items in the agenda – the “NaFFAagate,” the “Menorgate” and the “Smartgate” scandals, among other outrageous and criminal conduct by the ruling corrupt-clique’s conspiracy. Macabenta, Lee, et al, of course would not admit the obvious truth.

The exposés on the NaFFAA lies and scams first reported by this writer and followed up by Romeo P. Marquez, *PinoyOnBoard.com* Publisher Patrick Villavert, New Jersey’s *Filipino Express* Columnist Ricky Rillera, the objective reporting of Chicago’s Joseph G. Lariosa (as Greg Macabenta only “talks” to him about the NaFFAagate allegations), the satirical comments of Seattle’s Jesse Jose and the exposés of Tito A. Cortez of San Jose (California) made it

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impossible – from the public-relations viewpoint – for the ruling clique to continue with its iron grip on the federation. Macabenta, et al, will not admit that the critics – as documented in the NaFFAagate section of this website – forced the clique to give up control of the elections for the federation’s national-executive officers (NEOs). To read some of the exposés, please go to <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/naffaagate/>

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The “Iwas Pusoy” Strategy

The NaFFAA’s ruling clique was forced to adopt the so-called “Iwas Pusoy” strategy. To the uninitiated, “Pusoy” is a 13-card poker game in the Philippines wherein a player is allowed to surrender his card or else he pays double his bet if the banker defeats him in all three (3-card and two 5-card) compartments of the game. “Iwas Pusoy” (after “Iwas,” the Filipino word for “to evade”) then is the colloquial term for cutting down one’s losses.

By abandoning their positions in the national hierarchy of the NaFFAA, the clique members of course did not extinguish their civil and/or criminal liability for allegedly looting the federation’s treasury. Or in the cases of Loida Nicolas Lewis and Alma Q. Kern, for tolerating the crooks in the NaFFAA to continue raiding the federation’s coffers – despite the warnings made to them personally by this writer.

This journalist of a whistle blower has reported the alleged criminal-and-civil misconduct of the

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NaFFAA corrupt ruling clique, as stated in this article written by Romy Marquez, [NJ Attorney General to Look at Alleged Financial Scams in the NaFFAA](#)

In a few days, this writer will post a reproduction of the information that he would have by then transmitted to the Internal Revenue Service and the Department of Justice for tax evasion, mail fraud, criminal conspiracy as an “organized crime” clique and other criminal conduct that could lead to an indictment for violation of the “Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.”

A Sword of “Damocreyes,” oops, Damocles

It was Poet-pundit Fred Burce Bunao (now deceased) who said that the exposés about the NaFFAAGate that this writer started in May 2000 were like the “Sword of Damocles” that hangs over the heads of the NaFFAA NEOs. Mr. Bunao then dubbed a Filipino-American version of it as the “Sword of Damocreyes.”

Columnist Jesse Jose tried to interview in 2006 and then this month his fellow Seattle resident, Alma Q. Kern, the NaFFAA national chair from 2006 to 2008, a single two-year tenure. Ms. Kern did not run also for reelection probably because of the NaFFAAGate Scandals.

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Mr. Jose e-mailed this editor last week: “Alma Kern also responded. She called me on my landline. She said her ‘lawyer had advised her not to say anything.’ Those are exactly her words. She seems to be a nice lady. Cordial on the phone, friendly and all that.”

Yes, the members of the NaFFAA ruling clique are actually having public-relations nightmares and sleepless nights. They are hiring lawyers and criminal attorneys to prepare for their possible indictment by the Feds and several state Attorneys General. Perhaps, Ms. Kern can eventually call her autobiography – if ever she writes one – as “The Filipino Version of “Sleepless in Seattle”

As NaFFAA cofounder Lourdes A. Ongkeko testified in August 2002 during the trial of the libel case she filed against me in the Los Angeles Superior Court, “Whenever my husband (and fellow plaintiff) hears the name of Bobby Reyes, his blood pressure shoots up. Yes, Reyes caused my husband’s recent stroke, and that is why his physician advised him not to show up at this trial.”

The First of Several “Deep Throats”

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After hearing the developments at the NaFFAA convention held last week, this writer had good laughs about his supposed “Deep Throat.” Macabenta, et al, accused one of the delegates, Ernie Gange, a NaFFAA cofounder and former NaFFAA chair for Pennsylvania, of being this writer’s “Deep Throat.”

This writer has never met in person Mr. Gange, who I called fondly as “Apo Ernie ‘Ganges Khan’ Gange.” We became “adversaries” in 1995 when he, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation, tangled with me over my objection to its “Woman of the Year” Award to former President Cory Cojuangco-Aquino. But afterwards, we became friends, as explained in this article, [Not Getting Mad at, But Getting Even With, Tita Cory](#)

Yes, it was an Ernie who became one of my “Deep Throats” in the NaFFAA. But it was not Ernie Gange. Now that he has gone to the Blue Yonder, I can reveal his identity: Dr. Ernie Ramos. (Please see Joseph Lariosa’s obituary piece: [Dr. Ernesto G. Ramos, Fil-Am Leader, Ran for Philippine President, Dies at 69](#))

Eventually the MabuhayRadio.com and the Media Breakfast Club of Los Angeles, CA, will give posthumously Dr. Ernie Ramos a “Filipino-American Braveheart (FAB)” Award. It may become the equivalent of President John F. Kennedy’s “A Profile of Courage.”

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Dr. Ramos, when he was the chairman of the NaFFAA’s chapter in Florida, contacted me and he proposed ways and means of ending my crusade for the ATIC in the NaFFAA. ATIC, as I coined, means “Accountability, Transparency, Integrity and Credibility.” He spoke (indirectly on my behalf) to the NaFFAA NEOs during the September 2006 convention in Honolulu about the need to release the documents for the 2002 convention of the federation in San Jose, CA. The 2002 convention resulted in the “Menorgate” Scandal. Despite the promise to him by then-newly-elected national chair, Alma Q. Kern, the NaFFAA refused to release the said financial report about the 2002 NaFFAA convention.

Eventually, Dr. Ramos and I would exchange views by telephone and e-mail. Before he left for Manila

for the presidential election on

May 10, 2010

, Dr. Ramos provided me a copy of the said “missing” 2002 financial report. I did not ask him where he got it but he said that some of his fellow officers in the Florida

chapter could vouch for the report’s veracity.

Dr. Ramos ran for the NaFFAA’s national chair in September 2008 during its convention in Seattle

Washington

. The “Lagareng Hapon” beat him by two votes in another “Lutong Macao

” election. Had Dr. Ramos won, he would have tapped my services to “reinvent” the NaFFAA. He even asked me if I was willing to serve as his pro-bono Executive Director. He said that my NaFFAAgate exposés were actually the main reason for the dearth of new members in the federation. The NaFFAAgate also prevented many old members from renewing their membership in it. He opined that the federation can attract old-and-new members if its “Number-one critic could be turned into its number-one recruiter.” But Dr. Ramos’s ideas never got off the ground because the ruling clique cheated him at that election – almost in the same way that it did the Ballygate Scandal.

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Editor's Note: To read about the Ballygate Scandal, please click on this link, [Why Many First-generation Filipino Immigrants Are Failing Badly as American Citizens](#))

Ernie Ramos tipped me off also on what has become the “Smartgate Scandal.” He said that the Smart Communications of the Philippines gave \$25,000 in donation for the 2008 NaFFAA convention in Seattle, WA. Up to now, the NaFFAA refuses also to issue any financial report about it.

When Romy Marquez told this editor that he had an article about the now-called “Smartgate,” I gave way to him in writing about the subject matter. Mr. Marquez then wrote this article, [NaFFAA's \\$50K Deal with Philippine Firm Raises Questions About Money Laundering](#)

Mr. Marquez would of course not tell me who his “Deep Throat” is on the “Smartgate” Scandal. But aside from Dr. Ramos, two well-meaning Filipino-American community leaders (definitely not Apo Ernie Gange) from the Eastern Seaboard provided this writer with more details about the “Smartgate” and other background materials on the leadership of the NaFFAA Region I chapter. This writer, like Mr. Marquez, will not of course reveal the identities of our other “Deep

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Throats” or informants.

Dr. Ramos and I continued our “partnership” also in working for political empowerment in the Philippines

. He asked me to join the senatorial slate of the Democratic Party of the Philippines (DPP), which he founded. I declined his offer, as I said that I preferred to run for the governorship of Sorsogon. He then asked me to become the official candidate of the DPP for the said position. I agreed. But then the DPP was not accredited by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC). Eventually, both Dr. Ramos’s presidential bid and those of the DPP national slates and my candidacy were denied official recognition by the COMELEC. The rest, as the adage goes, is history.

By next installment, we will discuss why the new NaFFAA national chair, Engr. Ed Navarra, has a good chance of “reinventing” the NaFFAA and its various regional chapters.

(To be continued . . .)

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