



# The Alumni Newsletter

Post-Convention Issue

Plano, Texas

October, 2003

## New York convention breaks record!



Part of the 200-strong audience at the 8-hour CME session on August 1st.

"If you build it, they will come!" This must have been the mantra of the Northeast Chapter led by the indefatigable duo of Drs. Alex and Debbie Bobila who tenaciously steered the host committee to offer alumni a spectacle of a convention/reunion at the Big Apple this summer. And they really came, in droves, to laugh, talk, reminisce, reconnect, party, share, and spend big! From July 30 to August 2, about 500 alumni and their families from all over came to New York, occupied the downtown Ritz Carlton Battery Park and Regent Wall Street Hotels, and savored everything that this exciting city had to offer. Some like the silver jubilarian Class '78 stayed in other hotels particularly in midtown Manhattan. Attendees came from as far as Banaue, Philippines, Kumamoto-Shi, Japan, and Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Most were from New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Illinois, Pennsylvania, California, Virginia, and Florida. Classes represented ranged from '61 to the freshly minted '03, the largest being the pearl jubilarian Class '73 followed by silver honorees Class '78, then ruby Class '63, last year's silver jubilarian Class '77 and jade Class '68. Marking their class milestones officially for the first time were the tin jubilarian Class '88 (15 years) and crystal jubilarian Class '83 (20 years).

As of press time, sources from the host chapter and the national organization indicated that the event was a huge success in terms of attendance at all scheduled activities, hotel occupancy, charitable donations actually paid, gross receipts and net proceeds. How did alumni like it? Look at the pictures in the next pages and see for yourselves!

The convention week kicked off with the alumni foundation's daylong workshop and annual meeting in Elizabeth, New Jersey and first golf outing at the Bethpage Golf Course, site of the 2002 U.S. Open, by 40 enthusiasts led by Drs. Andy Antonio '73 and Amy Malihan '76 on July 30. The second day brought in more golf aficionados to the charity golf tournament at Skyview Golf Course in nearby New Jersey, led by Dr. Elmer Gilo '73 and Dr. Malihan. The day also saw a steady stream of happy arrivals at the registration desk capped by the raucous sold-out Latin Caribbean Night reception party at the Ritz where dancing and singing contests were held and golf prizes awarded. Day 3 started with the serious business of a well-subscribed and organized CME, Cuyekeng Lecture, exhibits, silent auction, fundraising sales of T-shirts and mementos, and ended with the traditional batch night that was celebrated non-traditionally by the silver jubilarians at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in midtown and the pearls hosting everybody else to a Roaring 20s Midsummer Night Swing at the Ritz complete with best attire contests, slide show, jubilarian class numbers, and lots of dancing. Medallions were also distributed by Drs. Divinagracia and Rastrollo to those **Continued on page 2**

## Castro steps down, Elma takes over



Dr. El Castro



Dr. Bayani Elma

The 15th annual alumni convention week got off to an auspicious start Wednesday, July 30th, with the alumni foundation's annual meeting and elections at the Marriott Courtyard Hotel, Elizabeth, New Jersey, in which Dr. El Castro '63, chairman for the past 6 years stepped down and Dr. Bayani Elma '68, current vice-chairman, got elected as new chairman effective that following Saturday, August 2nd.

The meeting was preceded by a short leadership workshop that morning that focused on charitable giving and fundraising options presented by representatives of American Express Company, the day's sponsors, and Dr. Kotoo Shoda '87, a light-hearted yet very engaging and versatile physician-entrepreneur, respectively. **Continued on page 3**

## Rastrollo proposes \$120,000 budget

Dr. Joseph Rastrollo, alumni association president, gave an upbeat report to the general assembly on August 2 at the Regent Wall Street Hotel. In a substantive presentation backed by optimistic but realistic figures on the association's finances and buoyed by the convention's unprecedented attendance, Rastrollo called for a first-ever budget of \$120,000 that clearly fulfills and may even exceed his administration's goal of raising \$50,000 for the Drug Assistance Program of UERMMH's charity hospital this year. That is in addition to other project programs of the alumni foundation that the association already supports. **Continued on page 6**



# Spirit is alive in New York . . . from page 1



of last year's Silver Jubilarian '77 who did not make it to Honolulu. August 2, the final day, started slowly as conventioners struggled to wake up after a nearly sleepless night of partying with classmates and schoolmates. While most stayed in their quarters and spent the day doing last minute shopping, sightseeing, and sprucing up for the gala night's mother of all parties, the rest joined the general assembly in the morning at

Chairman Dr Elma briefly outlined his policies and appealed for everybody's help and cooperation. Also in attendance at both meetings were Dean Valdellon and the officers of the alumni auxiliary UERMMM Alliance & Friends, Inc. Both organizations tackled their respective agendas with parliamentary dispatch and a sense of accomplishment and unity at adjournment.

Then the grandest gathering that night at the Regent followed, attended by a capacity crowd of 622 that had patiently gone through the security sweep conducted by burly cops and a sniffing dog protecting the wealthiest street in the modern world. The black tie gala proudly toasted the 42 Class '78 silver jubilarians who received their commemorative medallions from Dr. Joseph Rastrollo and became teary-eyed during the candlelight ceremony. The Northeast Chapter Chorus Line set the elegant tone of the evening dancing to



the early morning *merienda* after each of the three nights of socials. There were also the raffles at the welcome party, CME, and the gala. The high point of the gala was the proud rendition of the UERMMM Hymn led by the Class '67 Choir, surrounded by the equally gregarious Jubilarian Classes '63, '68, '73, '78, and '88. The party just had to break up at its feverish height



the Regent Wall Street Hotel to hear reports from the Dean of the College of Medicine, President of the UERMMM, Outgoing and Incoming Chairmen of the Alumni Foundation, President and Executive Director of the Alumni Association. The dwindled audience hung on to bid for the dean's wish list and funding requests at the noon auction. The session's success was a bit different from previous years' in that this time around, the alumni foundation treasurer got the donations in immediate check payments instead of just settling for pledges.

The twin alumni organizations held their final business meetings in the afternoon, started by the alumni association's executive council presided over by Dr Joseph Rastrollo, followed by the alumni foundation's board of trustees' swearing in and turnover ceremonies. Dr. Romeo Divinagracia administered the oath of office to the officers and members of the board of trustees. New



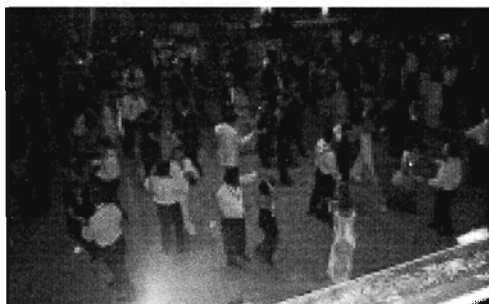
### Convention Prayer

*Lord, we give you thanks today for gathering us from the four winds to reminisce, to learn, to share, to rest. Help us to accept one another as you have taught us. Imbue us with your Spirit during our deliberations and celebrations. Enable us to affirm the idealism of our students, edify the dedication of our teachers, and honor the innovation of our administrators so that out of our Alma Mater's halls come physicians who will take compassion on the sick, the poor, the needy and oppressed.*

*To your Holy One who calms the troubled sea, cures both lame and insane, restores the lifeless, we offer all. Amen.*

the tune of "New York, New York," inviting alumni and their guests to enjoy the 18-piece swing orchestra playing under the huge dome of a cavernous ballroom. The favorite entrée was beef, then chicken, fish the least. The wine was *nouveau suave*. The national anthems were heartfelt and patriotic. The *dasal* was fervent. The emcees were real pros not because Drs. Bing Carin and Ber de la Merced were from Class '73 but they entertained, stuck to the program's rhythm, cajoling yet deferential to the partygoers. No one seemed to listen to the speeches but Dr. Alex Bobila expressed his appreciation for everyone's participation and the host chapter's hard work in pulling off a memorable affair; Dr. Rastrollo got off some terse thoughts on unity, cooperation, harmony, and teamwork his chest; Dr Joey Prudencio displayed the elation of his class as he pledged his class support for the medical center's research program.

Amidst all these, Dr Debbie Bobila worked feverishly to ensure everyone had a good time down to the minutest manageable details. As the grand hostess, she was *par excellence!* Each table even had some woven fans for sentimental attendees to take home after cooling themselves after sweaty rounds of non-stop dancing. There were always



because of strict contractual constraint. Nonetheless, it was truly "Some Enchanted Evening at the Regent!" Some classes could not get enough. The next day Sunday when many had begun heading home, they held picnics and more tours of the city. It took several days after for many to wind down.

The 15th convention drew the highest and most diverse attendance so far and raised the most money for alumni projects in support of UERMMM particularly President Rastrollo's drug assistance program for charity patients. Seizing upon this momentum, the Midwest Chapter led by Drs. Manny Blas and Susan Perez-Suntay already secured the venue (Marriott Hotel on Michigan Ave.) and is finalizing the details of the 16th reunion in Chicago, Indian word for "great," on August 5-7 2004.



## Tiongeo wows 'em



Dr. Ida Tiongeo of the Jade Jubilarian Class '68, professor of dermatology at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University in New York and former visiting professor of dermatology at the UERMMMCC College of Medicine spoke of dermatology as a down-to-earth medical

specialty that can be brought to the hinterlands and inner cities of both a developing country like the Philippines as well as an advanced country like the United States.

In her luncheon talk at the the Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture on August 1st at the Ritz Carlton Hotel Tiongeo wowed alumni with colorful slides of various dermatologic conditions mostly from patients she had seen during her medical missions in Banaue, and Bohol. She took her audience through a rapid review of dermatological lesions starting with the simplest rash to the most complicated skin manifestations of systemic diseases, concentrating on allergies, infection, parasitism and drug reactions (medicamentosa). She rehased the topical steroid potency rankings to drive home the point that "no two steroids are alike." Her biggest advice: do not give Lotrisone as she showed pictures of hideous lesions that this steroid-antifungal combination could induce.

Tiongeo demonstrated further that dermatology is not an elitist field because it can be economically and efficiently delivered to the masses who need it very badly and appreciate it. She took pride doing just that in her missions supported mainly by her classmates, friends, and the alumni foundation. She touted the travel side of her trips as well.



Dr. Tiongeo was introduced by Dr. Benjamin Rigor, past alumni association president and chairman of the CME committee. During his opening remarks, Rigor paid tribute to the late Dean Jose Cuyegkeng as a "strict disciplinarian but a very fair man!"

After her talk, Tiongeo received a plaque of appreciation as this year's Cuyegkeng lecturer from alumni officials to the proud applause of her classmates, one of whom was Dr. Antonio Ligot of Banaue, Ifugao, himself a missionary doctor.

## Castro steps down . . . from page 1



Dr. Elma receives the gavel from Dr. Castro



Dr. Miranda presents plaque to the Castros

Presided over by Dr. Conrad Miranda IV president, the business session dealt with the issues in the approval menu left over from last year's meeting in Honolulu. The trustees approved different reports with corrections. Making full use of the *uermalumni.org*'s website edited by former foundation vice-president Dr. David Roble '65, the board for the first time considered the detailed reports of the chairman and treasurer which were earlier uploaded there for all interested parties to see. Dr. Elmer Gilo treasurer, reported net assets of \$ 380,133 as of end of reporting cycle. Dr. Elma proposed needed changes to the constitution for better governance. Full reports will be detailed in the next issue of the foundation newsletter in late autumn.

In the elections that afternoon, six members of the board were voted in, five (Drs. Elma, Jose Prudencio, Renato Raymundo, Manuel Blas, and Isabelita Barnachea-Casibang) will serve for 3 years till 2006, one, Dr. Roy Baldomero, will serve out the remaining 2 years of Dr. Castro's term. Castro resigned to concentrate on fundraising and support activities. The trustees then elected the following officers: Bayani Elma, chairman; Renato Querubin, vice-chairman; Conrad Miranda, president; Dekiam Ong, vice-president; Roly Mendoza, secretary; Isabelita B. Casibang, asst. secretary and parliamentarian; Elmer Gilo, treasurer; Roy Baldomero, asst. treasurer; and new committee members Evasio Cagande and Dr. Kotoo Shoda. With the passing of the gavel, Castro formally turned over the chairmanship to Elma on Saturday, Aug. 2 at the Regent Hotel after the new and re-elected trustees and officers had been sworn in by Dr. Romeo Divinagracia. Castro presented each new trustee with the policies and working manual of the foundation. He and spouse, outgoing board secretary Mrs. Amuerfina Castro, were then awarded plaques of commendation by Dr. Miranda for valuable services to the foundation and UERMMMCC. Emeritus Chairman Dr. Wilmer Heceta's "you're OK" rounded out the simple turnover ceremony.

In his "Final Thoughts" during the annual meeting, Castro expressed confidence that with good leadership, the foundation's survival is assured and called for future changes that are "positive and enduring" to make it so. To all members and leaders, he counseled: "humility to superiors is a duty, humility to success is a triumph, humility to failure is nobility!" Elma accepted his election saying "the task of chairman is daunting but I am humbled by your trust and confidence" and vowed to promote charity among alumni for "charity is the mother of all virtues!"

In its first meeting under the new chairman, the board of trustees confirmed most existing committee appointments and appointed Renato Querubin as new head of audit, ethics, and constitution & by-laws, and Dr. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, association executive director, as head of the research committee. It affirmed the pre-convention day as the annual meeting day of the foundation per amendment to the by-laws adopted at the July 30th meeting. The board also decided to hold the 3rd leadership workshop and strategic meeting on November 22, 2003, again at the Marriott Courtyard, Elizabeth, NJ to tackle email etiquette, ethical responsibilities, goal setting, program implementation and evaluation. Lastly, the board approved a motion to open a foundation bank account in the

Philippines with any (president, chair-the medical school) disbursement. This for the alumni foun-grams in the Philip-been budgeted. It is would greatly im- tion at UERMMMCC and administration to the alumni organiza-



Dr. Elma conducts his first board meeting.

two of the three signo- man of the board, dean of validating the check for move would make it easier dation to fund project prop- pines that have already hoped that this mechanism prove the quality of educa- and encourage both faculty work more closely with tions to achieve it.

# CME presents clinical trends

A record 198 registered alumni attended the CME entitled "Advances and Controversies in Medicine" on August 1st. The day-long session that included the luncheon Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture by Dr. Ida Tiongco earned for each one 8 hours of category 1 credit from Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. After President Rastrollo's welcome remarks, Dr. Roger Lucas directed the seminar from the contemporary topics of bioterrorism and botulism through the bread-and-butter issues of allergy, and hypertension to the medical management trends of informatics and HIPAA billing compliance.



Dr. Philip Larussa, a pediatric infectious diseases professor at Columbia, started off with the latest update on bio-terrorism and current immunization, antidotes and emergency management.



He focused on the controversial anti-smallpox and anti-anthrax vaccination programs which have largely been voluntary but advised specifically for first responders (emergency, law enforcement, military) and healthcare workers. He reassured that in due time, these vaccines' safety would be more enhanced and the publicized scary side effects minimized.

Next was Dr. Ricardo Mabanta's timely talk on botulinum toxin for movement disorders. The 1986 UERMMMCM alumnus who practices and teaches neurology at the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine discussed the historical development of the toxin from a "scourge and weapon of war" to a therapeutic agent ("from poison to potion," he called it) its mechanism of action and its approved uses in cervical dystonia, hemifacial spasm, strabismus and blepharospasm and in facial dermatology (glabellar lines). He also presented the downside of off-label uses of botox in so-called beauty enhancement boutiques.

Silver jubilarian Dr. Ruby Reyes, a clinical instructor of allergy and immunology at the UMD-NJ Medical School opened the mid-morning phase of the program with her "Recent Advances in Allergy." She discussed the current mechanism



of allergy on the molecular level especially the clearer understanding of the role of leukotrienes. Reyes advocated early desensitization for atopic allergy but at the same time reassured that "allergy's nature is that it burns out."

The most questions from the audience during the CME were generated by the pre-lunch talk on the new JNC-7 standards in the treatment of hypertension by Dr. Jan Basile, a professor of medicine from the Medical University of South Carolina. Basile spoke with first-hand knowledge on the topic as a participant in the drafting of the said controversial guidelines. He decried physicians' inability to decisively reduce the high prevalence of uncontrolled hypertension due to "clinical inertia, failure to titrate, non-adherence and failure to use combinations." He advocated the widespread use of home B.P monitoring devices by patients to help physicians accomplish "good control." He urged the use of a diuretic in combination with either an ACE inhibitor, angiotensin receptor blocker (ARB), or calcium channel blocker

In the afternoon session, Dr. Edward Shortlife, professor of medicine and computer science at Columbia, demonstrated the applicability of biomedical informatics in hospital and large office practices. He added that it would promote effective clinical alerting and consensus or evidence-based guidelines to deliver quality care, minimize medical errors, save cost, and increase profitability/productivity. This impressed Dr. Divinagracia so much that he later expressed his desire to upgrade UERMMMCM's cyberlibrary along this line.

Dr. Jose Prudencio, another silver jubilarian and a urologist from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, emphasized vigilance in screening for prostate cancer in the 50-65 year old age group citing that 20% of new cases come from it. He specified PSA values above 10 as the likely parameter that would yield about 50% of adenocarcinoma of the prostate. He offered surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, hormonal ablation and their combinations for various stages of the disease but stressed early detection as the key in preventing deaths that are more than those of breast cancer and AIDS.

Germania Echeverry, a senior management consultant from Tampa, Florida, gave the final talk on HIPAA urging doctors to "exercise oversight in the front, back, and billing offices" as well as "your doctor habits" and employees to avoid "stiff penalties" for both unknown and known violations.



## 1st PBL batch scores 64% in August boards

One hundred thirty-six out of 211 members of Class 2002 passed the recent physician licensure examination given in Manila and Cebu by the Board of Medicine of the Professional Regulation Commission in August, 2003. They were among the 1,350 successful candidates out of 2,430 examinees (56%) nationwide whose names had been released on August 19 two days after the last day of examination. The examiners were Drs. Juanito Billote, chairman, Jose Ramirez, and Ricardo Fulgencio, members.

Reliable sources told the *Alumni Newsletter* that the 64% performance of the charter class of the new PBL curriculum brought a sigh of relief to the UERMMMCM faculty and administration which had braced for a far more dreadful result. This has somehow reassured the campus that the medical school may have already reached the bottom plateau. The score in August, 2002 with the last batch of the traditional curriculum was 66%. It improved to 75% in the February exam after the intensive review effort exerted by the young administration of Dean Valdellon. School officials took comfort with UERM's retention of its no. 4 ranking among medical schools in the country with at least 100 examinees.

Faculty sources said that UP is still no. 1 (97%), followed by UST (85%), and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (76%). UERM narrowly beat back FEU (62%). Bringing up the rear in the 100-plus category are: La Salle (47%), Fatima (26%), and MCU (15%). Among the under 100-examinee schools, the scores are: Cagayan State U, St. Paul U-Tuguegarao, and Western Visayas State College all 100% with 1-2 candidates, Cebu Institute of Medicine (87%), Ateneo de Zamboanga (86%), Xavier U, Cagayan (79%), Cebu Doctors College (75%), West Visayas State U (72%), St. Louis U (67%), St. Luke's (64%), Davao Medical School (55%), and Perpetual Help Laguna (8%). The rest of the country's 37 or so medical schools registered zero passing.

The dean's office did not respond to the *Newsletter's* requests for comment. Careful check on the successful examinees' list published by the *Philippine Daily Inquirer's* online edition on Tuesday, August 19 showed no school bets among the top ten whose grades ranged from 83.5% to 85.75%. U.S. alumni reaction centered on the twin approach of full scholarship funding to attract the best students and review class funding for better test preparation.

The oath-taking for the new physicians was on September 14, 2003 at the PICC, Roxas Blvd.. Registration was from Aug. 28 to Sept. 14. The initial registration fee now costs P400 and the annual registration fee which is good for 3 years is P300. PMA registration in RP is mandatory.

# "Let us continue to work together!"



This was the concluding plea of Dean Erlinda Valdellon in her state of the medical school report entitled SARS (State of the Academic Report for Schoolyear 2003-2004) delivered before the general assembly on August 2nd at the Regent

Wall Street Hotel. She laid the basis for such an appeal as she cited facts that she had hoped would make alumni proud of UERMMM as "not just the best medical school along Aurora Blvd." but one of the best in the country.

Expressing satisfaction over the outcome of the accrediting body PAASCU's initial survey in the spring, Valdellon showed efforts by her administration to address the deficiencies found by the private voluntary agency. Only UP and UERM out of 37 medical schools have applied for accreditation. UERM has been given a "candidate status for 6 months to one year" The dean who belongs to the ruby jubilarian class of '63 vowed to attain a "level one" accreditation for the school within that period.

Accreditation focuses on the curriculum, faculty, students, facilities particularly the library, clinical training, and research. Faculty wise, the 18 departments with a total of 227 members are deemed adequate but masteral or doctoral degrees in

medical education are encouraged. Over a year ago, half a dozen faculty led by Drs. Alex Varilla, head of the department of medicine, and Romeo Encanto, former chief of clinics, earned their masters degrees at the nearby Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

As to the curriculum, PAASCU commended UERMMM for being the first of 8 medical schools in the Philippines that are on the innovative (PBL) curriculum. The only problem found was in implementation, Valdellon continued. This is being remedied by more faculty workshops and seminars. Also, faculty opposition to PBL has lessened as the school began its 6th year of implementation. Faculty sources in the campus conceded to the *Newsletter* that the basic sciences have adapted better than the clinical departments but the gap has narrowed.

About student issues, Valdellon said that the college continues to support upper classmen's efforts to help freshmen through their "survival kit." She acknowledged the drop in freshman admission from the usual low 300s till 2001 2002 to 225 in 2002-2003 to the current schoolyear's 232. She attributed this to the nurse shortage abroad that has drawn otherwise medical school applicants to the country's nursing schools, opening of more medical schools raising the total from 27 to 37 in the last five years, and cost which has gone up from

P45,000 five years ago to P65,000 per student per semester today

Clinical training, another area of weakness cited by PAASCU, requires more patients in the hospital, she added, and continued affiliation with the University of Maastricht in Holland. External clinical rotation for foreign students especially from the U.S. is now being developed for which the dean openly asked help from alumni here.

She thanked alumni for their \$35,000 gift last year which has enabled the school to complete its local network and accessibility to global networking. "We are wired!" she proclaimed.

She also announced that the school is now a member of the prestigious International Association of Medical Science Educators which has asked UERM to join its journal.

In closing, Dr Valdellon reiterated that "my overall mission as dean is to improve the quality of our graduates." "The faculty is concerned about current student competitiveness," she said, and "resources are scarce" but affirmed that "the faculty is committed" to turning out "competent, compassionate and civic-conscious physicians!"

## State of UERMMM: Dark clouds ahead

Following the dean's presentation, UERMMM President Dr Romeo Divinagracia, also of Class '63, proposed a forward-looking scenario for the future. While noting the medical center's achievements, he also acknowledged the problems at hand. Against such backdrop, he boldly averred: "Let us shoot for the moon and if we miss, we will still be among the stars!"

Thus, he restated the mission of the center (excellence in education and training, quality care, research, and community service) as well as its vision ("to be a premier academic institution"). Then he enunciated an ambitious 3-year medical school plan to: 1) fully develop the curriculum by 2005, 2) 95-100% board passing by 2006, and 3) land a graduate in the national board's top ten by 2006, all to coincide with the center's celebration of its 50th year of founding on June 15, 2007. Same for the colleges of nursing and physical therapy. For the hospital, he looked to reach an 85-90% occupancy, positive financial balance by 2005, and elevation to a tertiary status. A master's degree in physical therapy would be added to the ones for diabetes and nursing already offered at the graduate school. Courses will

be offered in care giving, medical technology, and respiratory therapy in response to the marketplace, he went on. He has also ordered the integration of all colleges into the community service program of the medical center.

How? By active recruitment of better students, building upgrades (a 4-storey hospital building annex would rise in the north campus, he said), strict policies of student promotion and retention, better faculty salaries and benefits, residency and fellowship tie ups with US alumni, more facilities, etc. He again offered open staff privileges to UERM graduates as well as those of the residency and fellowship programs.

The center is on its way to these goals he argued as he reported a 60-85% admission rate in the hospital and the conferment of a "deregulated status" to the center by the CHED (Commission on Higher Education) last year. This has enabled UERMMM to formulate course offerings without prior strict government approval and set tuition fees "without student input," he explained.

He admitted that the medical center has problems. For one, income is still 0.6% below budget although it rose to P7.9 M in the just ended fiscal year. "So you can see how tight our operation is," he emphasized. He added that enrollments in medicine and physical therapy have fallen due to the exodus of students to nursing and the entry of San Beda, Medical City, Ateneo, and Amable Aguiluz Foundation medical schools into the marketplace grabbing plum students from UP and Ateneo who would otherwise apply to UERM.

Recently, the employees union demanded the implementation of the collective bargaining agreement with the center with a notice of strike to back it up. "We are confident we can resolve this problem," he declared. Finally, the UERMMM foundation's charter expires in its 50th year so it must decide what to do. He made his position clear: "As far as I'm concerned, UERMMM should be continued as a going concern!"



# Rastrollo proposes . . . from page 1



General Assembly



Executive Council Meeting

Rastrollo's State of the Association address incorporated the Executive Director Dr. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz's ways and means-like budget presentation. He and Manlapaz took credit for the improved administration of the UERMMMCMAAA, Inc. with: electronic documentation and record-keeping (all uploaded in the *uermexcouncil* website); streamlined membership listing; better communication through the expanded email loop *uermmmcaaaa@yahoo.com*, newly created association website *uermalumni.org*, and an expanded *Alumni Newsletter* and better planning for the annual convention/reunion emphasizing early registration, targeted fund-raising, promotional branding of activities; and long range planning exemplified by the strategic planning held last August 30th in Baltimore. All of these were accomplished within the \$87,000 budget approved by the council in Honolulu last year, Manlapaz reported.

For the final year of his two-year term, Rastrollo unveiled his "game plan" which he described as "challenging but achievable." The plan seeks to build on the above successes he said with the drug assistance program for charity or indigent patients as its centerpiece. Other elements of it are: membership drive to involve the estimated 3,000 to 4,000 UERMMMC alumni who are in the U.S. and Canada out of the total of 8,709 so far turned out by the school (there are currently 2,600 graduates in the membership list); campaign to boost the lifetime membership which he sadly noted to be a measly 123 to date; application for the association's own CME accreditation; medical mission to underserved areas in the Philippines; and new fundraising called the "Tree of Life" in addition to those of the annual convention's. To do these, Drs. Rastrollo and Manlapaz proposed a budget of about \$120,000, an increase of 37% over last year's, based on an income of about the same or slightly more coming from the New York convention. As of this writing, final accounting is still pending from the host chapter. But Manlapaz and the NEC's Dr. Debbie Bobila had expressed a strong sense of this being even exceeded. \$50,000 or 41% of this budget would go to the drug assistance program which Rastrollo envisioned not only as a public service to poor Filipino patients at UERMMH but more so as a way to improve the clinical training of students. In a phone interview two weeks after the convention, Dr. Manlapaz clarified that the said amount would be put in an endowment or restricted fund within the alumni foundation to be held for the alumni association which in turn would keep adding to it yearly until it reached a proposed goal of \$300,000. Then the investment income from it would be disbursed for indigent care in perpetuity. Manlapaz hoped that each year the association could raise at least \$50,000 for this fund to be able to reach its endowment threshold in the next 5 years or sooner.

At the annual executive council meeting that followed the general assembly on that Saturday afternoon, Dr. Rastrollo presided over a top-heavy agenda that included officers' reports, chapter reports, standing committee reports, the homecoming in December, and next year's 16th convention in Chicago. The body approved all of the president's requests plus a few other administrative expenses that were not earlier covered. Some amendments to the constitution and by-laws were also approved for ratification by the general membership at next year's convention.

The Chicago convention committee chaired by the Midwest Chapter President Dr. Manuel Blas aided by Dr. Susan Perez-Suntay, national vice-president, announced that hotel reservations would start as early as October 3, 2003 and continue until July 15, 2004 with option to book for two nights before or two nights after the said cutoff date for \$149/day. A minimum of 140 rooms have been reserved for the occasion. The CME will be accredited by the Philippine Medical Association of Chicago. For particulars, please see the announcements in this issue and the next *Alumni Foundation Newsletter* issue in early winter. National elections will also be held at the 16th convention. Up for grabs are the positions of president-elect, secretary, and treasurer. The current president-elect, Dr. Blas, will be sworn in as president at the final night's gala honoring the silver jubilarian class '79 as well as the ruby class '64, jade '69, and pearl '74. Candidates must submit their c.v.'s to the nominating committee headed by past president Dr. Renato Querubin [REQUE@aol.com](mailto:REQUE@aol.com).

## Dateline Philippines

### Candidate status for medical school

PAASCU a private accrediting agency granted the UERMMMC College of Medicine a "candidate status" for 6 to 12 months effective May 12, 2003 following its preliminary survey of the school on February 13 to 14. Certain deficiencies were found in the survey for which recommendations were made for completion by the school within the said period. Satisfaction of these requirements would confer upon the school a level I accreditation status. Only UP and UERMMMC have submitted to this new accreditation process. Such seal of approval will qualify the school to receive student loan funding for US-based foreign students, among other benefits. Read more about the PAASCU survey in Dr. Valdellon's report on page 5. (Source: UERMMMC's website [www.uerm.ph](http://www.uerm.ph))

### 46th foundation day celebrated

UERMMMC marked its 46th year on June 16, 2003 with a mass and program at the gym. Led by President Romeo Divinagracia, the anniversary program recognized valued employees who have served the center for 40, 35, 30, 25, 20 and 15 years, and outstanding medical alumni. Divinagracia himself received his 40-year pin along with 2 other awardees. Cited for being presidents of their specialty societies were: Drs. Fidel Payawal '73, anesthesiology; Annette Pizarro-Borromeo '75 heart association, Renato Carlos '76, interventional and vascular radiology; Rafael Josen '83, CT-MRI, Danilo Sacdalan '80, pediatric gastroenterology & nutrition; Marvin Basco '78, gastroenterology; Amel Malaya '82, rehab medicine. Honored for being hospital medical directors were: Remegio Olveda '73, Research Institute for Tropical Medicine; Cirilo Galindez '78, Veterans Regional Hospital, Nueva Vizcaya; Venancio Banzon '73, Jose Lingad Regional Hospital, Pampanga; Conrado Oca '92, Seaman's Hospital, Manila.

The corporate values of the medical center were again restated during the celebration: "integrity, trustworthiness, sincerity, compassion, loyalty, ethics, accountability, and respect." Rev Fr Dr Jerry Bongcawil '70 at the mass' homily reminded the assembly that these values constitute the "rock of the medical center" and that "our values dictate our language our actions our destiny." "Sana UE will last," he wished. (*Mediscope, 2nd Q 2003 Issue*)

\* NEWS BRIEFS \* NEWS BRIEFS \*

**Ampalaya leaves bitter trail**

The *Philippine Daily Inquirer's* news service on August 24, 2003 reported that Health Secretary Dr. Conrado Dayrit "ordered the fast-growing *ampalaya* (*amargoso* or balsam apple) pill and tea industry to stop promoting *ampalaya* as a diabetic cure." Proponents of the product in the Philippines have touted it for years as effective in lowering blood sugar if used along with proper diet and exercise. In 1995, then Health Secretary Dr. Hilarion Ramiro "classified *ampalaya*, *lagundi*, *tsaang-gubat*, *sambong* and other plants as generic substitutes to (sic) imported and higher-priced medicines." Opponents said "we do not consider *ampalaya* to be part of the standard care" for diabetes, "neither" its prevention.

**Nurse-practitioner course now offered**

UERMMMC received the CHED 's approval for its master of science in nursing degree effective this schoolyear. The curriculum which will turn out advanced nurse-practitioners will be offered by the graduate school under Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Jr.'s office of academic affairs. (*Mediscope*, 2nd Q 2003 Issue)

**Dateline USA****Where the fats are**

The *Physician Financial News* in its February 28, 2003 issue listed the following in the order of ranking from number 1 as the top ten "fattest cities" in the U.S.: Houston, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, St. Louis MO, Cleveland, Atlanta, Columbus OH, Dallas, and Charlotte NC.

**8 herbals to stop before surgery**

Echinacea, ephedra, garlic, ginkgo, ginseng, kava, St. John's wort, and valerian. Why? Echinacea can cause immunosuppression and hepatotoxicity; ephedra cardiovascular interference; ginkgo some bleeding; kava sedation-hypnosis; St. John's wort antidepressant and antiplatelet effects; and valerian sedation-hypnosis. (*Internal Medicine News*, May 1, 2003)

**Please write legibly!**

Effective July 1st this year, the State of Florida now requires doctors to legibly print or type prescriptions and to write out the month and quantity of drugs (in addition to the quantity in numbers) or else "face scrutiny from the state medical board for bad handwriting." (*American Medical News*, August 4, 2003)

**Malpractice litigation in other countries**

Are heard mostly by judges instead of juries, use only court-appointed experts; prohibits lawyer's contingency fees; requires losers to pay the winner's legal bill. (*Medical Economics*, July 25, 2003)

\*  
NEWS  
BRIEFS\*  
NEWS  
BRIEFS

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# Baltimore strategic meeting tackles hot issues

An in-depth report entitled "Alumni Unfinished Business" published in the May 2003 issue of the *Newsletter* provoked an avalanche of spirited email, phone and even letter exchanges from alumni both here and the Philippines. Spurred on by some alumni's deep angst about special duties during their clerkship and internship of old, the responses took a wide swipe at the "UERMMMC experience" from the perceived cruelty of some residents and professors, greed of owners, indifference of some faculty, irresponsibility of some students, apathy of many alumni, to what ails Philippine society in general. In the end, the whole exercise brought nearly everyone to the consensus that alumni **care** about the quality of education at the school, that the school **strives** to address issues that impair positive student and alumni attitudes, and finally, that the alumni association **can** lead efforts to help improve the school. Thus, Dr. Rastrollo's call for everyone to sit down and brainstorm on these matters after the convention. Please read Dr. Valdellon's open letter and representative ideas from alumni in the editorial section on pages 25 to 29. Based on the information obtained by the *Newsletter* from the office of the executive director, the following is what the interested alumni discussed at the meeting in which all ideas herein, said Dr. Irene I. Manlapaz, will be further studied and prioritized by the executive committee for eventual recommendations to the executive council at next year's annual meeting in Chicago:

The full-day affair was held on Saturday, August 30, 2003 at Baltimore's Sheraton International Hotel. It was attended by 21 participants led by President Joseph Rastrollo '73 and Chapter President Renato Flores '79. The meeting was divided into 4 sessions following the format: overview, group discussion, then recommendations.

**Session 1 The Alumni Association.** Opening the session was an introductory talk by Dr. Rogelio Sion '63, second president of the association, on the role of the executive director. He emphasized that this position is appointed by the president for a term of two years starting with the second year of the appointing president's, subject to reappointment, and is designed to ensure the continuity of the management of the association. The term of elected officers is two years. Then fund raising objectives were presented. A clearer identification of these objectives for each of the two alumni organizations were thought of to make such an activity more marketable i.e. indigent fund such as that of the UERMMH's charity ward and alumni development to be primarily handled by the association while faculty development, student development such as scholarship and infrastructures could be the foundation's emphasis.

The group discussion moderated also by Dr. Sion came up with ways for U.S. alumni to make the UERMMMC College of Medicine provide quality education (faculty development programs for both old and new faculty, teaching tools, research development and mentorship, visiting professor program and speakers bureau, better teaching materials among others). An *ad hoc* committee was suggested to address this issue.

"How can the alumni association encourage U.S. alumni to be active and/or involved?" The ideas put forward were: continuing the annual convention and reunion, creation of more chapters, networking, coordination with the Philippine alumni association, reaching out to new graduates who are in the U.S., those taking the USMLE, or those seeking residency positions, formation of a "young alumni group," "specialty clustering," surveying alumni on what can the association do for them instead of the other way around.

Rounding out this section was the question of the chapters' roles in enabling the association to stay solvent and active in supporting the *Alma Mater*. Some said expanding the current chapters, creating new chapters again, constant updating of membership roster, involving the chapter presidents more in the decision-making of the national body, and of course, fund raising!

**Session 2 The Alumni Foundation vis-à-vis the Alumni Association.** New foundation chairman, Dr. Bayani Elma '68 reviewed the differences between the 501C3 foundation and the 501C6 association: the former being the older (founded in 1981) of the two; donations to the former being 100% tax deductible vs. that of the 1988 founded association not being so; the former has no members while the latter has members.

The ensuing group discussion moderated by Dr. Sion again tackled the problem of how to "encourage U.S. alumni to donate their hard-earned money to the foundation." Through better information, good accountability and reporting, transparency in the foundation's workings, supporting the alumni association's activities to attract more alumni and enhance a giving attitude, better marketing, effective follow-up of pledges, making donation easier through credit card charges, bank account deductions, website collection, targeting big contributors, and being more open to volunteers. The session concluded with "how can the alumni foundation raise funds on its own?" Through "high impact" projects and social events apart from the association's **Continued on pg. 8**



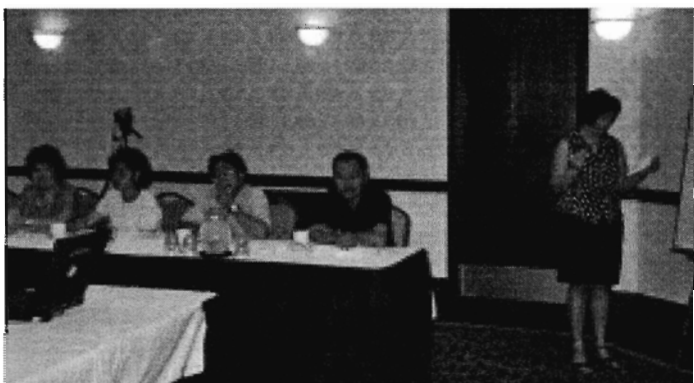
## Baltimore strategic planning . . . Continued from page 7

pharmaceutical grants, private company grants, and direct foundation solicitations in tandem with publication of projects.

**Session 3 Philippine alumni association.** The afternoon's first topic delved on how the two associations on each side of the ocean can work together to improve the quality of education of medical students. After a brief overview by Executive Director Dr. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz '75, the panel discussed their concerns (low passing rate in the Philippine board exams including the 1st PBL batch, we are not attracting good quality medical students, very tough recruitment competition among 37 medical schools, 11 of which are in the MetroManila area). Moderated by Dr. Vincent Casibang '71 the 5th association president, participants offered these solutions to improve board performance: more intensive review classes, comprehensive exam as a screening test for board examinees similar to what UST is doing with its *revalida*, promotional basic comprehensive exam after second year and exit clinical comprehensive exam before graduation (these are being done now as diagnostic exams at UERMMMC), alumni spending for a strong basic science faculty and subsidy for review classes. To attract better medical students, they thought of merit and/or need-based full scholarships, effective marketing, scouting, and recruitment program, and perhaps, reduction of tuition fees.

To cement the ties between the U.S. and Philippine associations, making the Philippine alumni association as a UERMMMCMAAA, Inc.'s group member was thought of. In addition, it was proposed that both groups jointly tap alumni who are not practicing. Ways to encourage or advise the Philippine alumni association to undertake fundraising on its own were mentioned to enable it to support necessary improvements in education there.

"How can we break the cycle of indifference among many of our alumni?" This segment offered COMMUNICATION through emails, letters, phone calls, and a common website with links to class websites.



**Session 4 Ownership.** The final area of discussion was perhaps the most contentious because it involved possible scenarios of the center's future in the short time of 4 years when the UERMMMC Foundation's charter expires. (To recall, the *College of Medicine* was first established as an integral college of the University of the East System which encompassed the *Recto* and *Caloocan* campuses. Then in 1957 it was spun off into a separate institution called the UERMMMC, a non-stock, non-profit private foundation, by then owner and UE President Francisco Dalupan, Sr. The governing board of trustees of UERMMMC has since then been appointed by the ownership of the University of the East which to date is magnate Mr. Lucio Tan. Editor) No one was certain what would happen in 2007 but the group came up with 3 scenarios: 1) Mr. Lucio Tan asks the College of Medicine to leave; 2) Mr. Lucio Tan leases the land to UERM College of Medicine and UERMMH (the hospital); 3) Mr. Lucio Tan renews the UERMMMC Foundation (to be decided by the UE Main Board of Trustees). The panel agreed that "we need to get Mr. Lucio Tan on our side rather than antagonize him" with the end in view of asking him to donate or lease the land.

Foremost in the minds of the brainstormers was "how can the UERM alumni make sure that our Alma Mater will survive for the years to come?" There were no clear-cut ideas other than showing U.S. alumni's keen interest in improving the quality of education at the medical school, maybe asking an audience with Mr. Tan to plead for the continuation of UERMMMC, conducting medical missions to show that we support its community standing, doing feasibility studies on the means and costs of owning it, etc.

"What will happen to our medical school transcripts?" in the event of a closure, they asked. This session moderated also by Dr. Casibang would research the matter through a committee appointed by the association. Information sources to be tapped were Mr. Generoso Magdaleno, long-time registrar, the Philippine government's Department of Education or Commission on Higher Education, and records on the defunct Caribbean medical schools.

Such weighty powwow made the participants very tired and hungry. So the MARVADC hosts treated them to an unforgettable crab feast. All in a day's work trying to solve the problems of UERMMMC!





# UERMMMC Research Output

(The following are selected from different issues of the UERMMM Journal of Health Sciences edited by Rene Edgar-Mendoza, M.D. Editor)

**Your jeepney driver is likely hard of hearing.** A comparative cross-sectional study was done to investigate accelerated hearing loss among jeepney drivers in Tanauan, Batangas. Thirty male jeepney drivers with mean age of 32 underwent screening audiograms. The readings were analyzed and compared with the general population and adjusted for age and sex-specific values that define hearing loss and thresholds. In both the high frequency and broad frequency categories, the subjects showed a higher degree of hearing loss than that of the target population. The author attributed his finding to noise hazard exposure defined as greater than the federally permissible standard of 91 dB for 8 hours a day. The result of this is the known pathology of cell death of the hair cells of the basilar membrane of the cochlea, an irreversible change. Conversely, discontinuation of such noise exposure results in the cessation of further cell death thus arresting further hearing loss progression. The author calls for widespread screening audiometry for public utility vehicle operators and the implementation of noise emission standards. *A Comparison of Hearing Thresholds Between Jeepney Drivers of Tanauan, Batangas, and a Highly Screened Otologically Normal Population* by Ramon Katigbak, M.D., ENT resident. May to August 2002 issue.

**Sodium bicarbonate induces prostatic tissue necrosis.** This was a prospective randomized experiment in which ten male cats received an intraprostatic infusion of sodium bicarbonate while another ten received only saline infusion. Open prostatectomy was performed on the cats five hours after infusion and the pathologies compared. The workers found that all of the cats that got the sodium bicarbonate had prostatic tissue necrosis evidenced by glandular necrosis, 9 of them showed 80-90% tissue necrosis, one showed only 50%. Those that got saline did not show any necrosis. The authors explained that as an alkalizing agent, sodium bicarbonate causes tissue alkali burns, eventually tissue coagulation necrosis. They went on to speculate that this cheap and readily available agent may be further developed as a chemical ablation treatment for BPH, another alternative to surgical and minimally invasive (thermal, laser and transurethral needle ablation) remedies for obstructive symptoms. *Sodium Bicarbonate-Induced Necrosis of Feline Prostate Gland* by Drs. Paul Anthony L. Sunga, Abelardo M. Prodigalidad, Jose Albert S. Reyes III, Antonio L. An-

Astacio, Angel Juakin M. Amante, and Benilda Fontanilla all of whom except Fontanilla who is a pathologist are from the Urology Section of the Department of Surgery. May to August 2002 issue.

**Betel nut reduces intraocular pressure in rabbits.** Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness. Current treatment is geared towards decreasing the intraocular pressure. Drugs currently available for this are too expensive for ordinary Filipinos to afford. This study sought to determine if *Areca catechu* (betel nut or *bunga*) could reduce intraocular pressure. The test solution was prepared by crushing one part betel nut and boiling it in 3 parts water for 10 minutes. The cooled solution was filtered. The resulting supernate was used as a solution applied to the eyes of 10 of the 20 test rabbits. The other ten served as controls (no eye drops applied). IOP measurements were done at designated times before and after administration of the solutions. The students found out that there was a drop of as much as 32% in IOP in the rabbits that had the test eye drop beginning one hour until 4 hours after application. The group concluded that betel nut could be further studied and later developed as an inexpensive alternative topical remedy for glaucoma. *An Experimental Study on the Use of Areca catechu Linn. ("betel nut"/"bunga") in Decreasing Intraocular Pressure in Rabbits* by Roderick Torres, Jui-ju Tseng, Charnel Umali, Anthony Trinidad, Mitchell Tsunoda, Sharon Umandap, and Jasper Tuazon, all of Medicine Class 2003, third place winner at the 5th Annual Research Forum, UERMMM, December 2002. January to April 2003 issue.

**PBL is well suited for medical education.** Two learning theories are explored: behavior learning which brings about knowledge by a stimulus-response connection and cognitive learning which conveys knowledge through the learner's interaction with the world around him. A later form of the latter called constructivist learning theory teaches that learning occurs when the learner constructs his own knowledge from his present and or past knowledge. In that sense, PBL is a constructivist learning type in that it is based on experiences, shared or distributed, puzzlement is a motivator, and social negotiation and ongoing testing are its building blocks. Because of this, increased retention of knowledge, its integration, promotion of life-long learning, increased interaction and motivation are achieved. Through it, the learner becomes an agent of change in a dynamic world. Thus its desirability in medical education where later on the problems in the doctor's community or workplace become the stimuli for further learning. *Theoretical Framework of Problem-Based Learning* by Florina F Estrada, M.D., Ph. D., College Secretary, Sept. to Dec. 2002 issue.

The new academic year got underway with the Opening Exercises and Recognition Day on Monday, June 9th at the gym, the *Mediscope* reported in its spring issue. Administration and faculty officials led by Dr. Romeo Divinagracia, President, and Dean Erlinda Valdellon, were on hand to greet the entire medical student body of 990 enrollees, down from last year's 1,109. Among them were 232 freshmen including 14 President Dalupan entrance scholars who were introduced by Dr. Geoffrey Battad, chairman of the admissions committee. There were 284 junior interns (4th year), 183 sophomores, and 291 juniors. These compared with last year's 290, 278, and 310, respectively. Fifty foreign students mostly from the U.S.A., Taiwan and Nigeria also attend the medical school.

There were no changes in the faculty lineup

## Opening rites welcome 990 students

announced at the exercises. In addition to recognizing the upper classmen's top ten, the opening day event also honored the 10 outstanding teachers in the basic sciences headed by this year's Dr. Esperanza Lansang Best Teacher awardee, Dr. Milagros Rabe from the Department of Physiology who has won the same plum for the second consecutive year. The others were: Drs. Agnes Alarilla-Alba, Ma. Theresa Cacas, Juliet Ver-Bareng, Idelfa Elevazo, Virginia Florentin, Floro Madarcos, Suzette Mendoza, Raul Quillamor and Marivic Villamor

No such awards were announced for the clini-

cal sciences but those elected to head their respective specialty societies this year were likewise recognized: Drs. Josephine Bundoc (rehab medicine), Edgardo Cortez (surgery), Amado San Luis (neurology), Ma. Trinidad Vera (OBGYN), Marvin Basco (gastroenterology), Joven Cuanang (stroke), Arnel Malaya (rehab medicine), Fidel Payawal (anesthesiology), and Sonia Rodriguez (child and adolescent psychiatry).

The school also proudly commended 8 faculty members who have earned graduate degrees in educational management and health professions education, an important qualification in the school's current application for PAASCU accreditation which began in late January.

In their remarks, Divinagracia and Valdellon called for a "culture of excellence" at the school.

# A thank you and a plea for unity

by Joseph S. Rastrollo, M.D.

*Following is the presidential address delivered at the 15th reunion's gala on August 2, 2003 at the Regent Wall Street Hotel, New York.*

President Romeo Divinagracia, Dean Erlinda Valdellon, officers of the alumni foundation, members of the alumni association, honored attendees, family members and friends, welcome and thank you for coming tonight. It is great to stand before such a distinguished and beautiful audience.

I would like you to know that it has been a great honor for me to have had the opportunity to serve you as your president for the past 12 months. I can only hope that my efforts have been worthwhile and worthy of the trust you have given me.

It has been an exciting and productive year. But rather than discuss the many activities of the year, I would like to spend my time in tribute to those who have made this a very successful and meaningful year and to also speak on the status of our organization.

We have an outstanding executive director Dr. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, whose commitment is unparalleled. She has given up a substantial portion of her meager free time to attend and manage the day to day affairs of the association. She has been a tireless contributor and has set a wonderful example for those who will follow her. It was indeed a pleasure to work with her throughout the year. Dr. Manlapaz, we owe you a debt of gratitude.

We have a premier product for which the efforts cannot go unacknowledged—our alumni newsletter edited by Dr. Samuel Piga. Our editor-in-chief has worked hard all year to provide the association with news publication. Before you read the pages of the newsletter an incredible amount of work has gone into preparation and proofing. He looks for timely and informative articles, obtains publication permission from original sources, and assures accuracy of the newsletter issue on a tight schedule. Under the editorship of Dr. Piga, future issues of our newsletter articles will chronicle various activities of our association and the foundation and updates on our *Alma Mater*. My thanks to Dr. Piga.

A special thanks to the Northeast Chapter under the strong leadership of Dr. Alex Bobila for the huge task and long sacrifice in preparing and hosting this convention. Let us recognize his relentless efforts throughout the entire period of preparation. No energy was too big or detail too small for his personal attention and time. Dr. Bobila, we are proud of your contribution and devotion to the association. We thank you and are honored to have had you as one of our leaders. Let me also thank all the committee chairpersons and their members for their hard work in making the convention a success, not to mention their personal sacrifices, countless sleepless nights and weekends, time that we all know belongs to their families. My heartfelt congratulations to the officers and members of the Northeast Chapter for a job well done.

I will be remiss if I will not acknowledge and compliment the generous efforts and dedication of Dr. Roger Lucas of the Northeast Chapter in coordinating and preparing a superb CME program for both alumni and non-alumni as well. We had excellent speakers and mentally stimulating topics. I would like to thank Dr. Lucas for preparing the best CME for our alumni.

We are also fortunate to have our advocacy needs in the capable hands of our foundation chairman, Dr. El Castro, and foundation president, Dr. Conrad Miranda. Not only have their advice and suggestions been important to us but their knowledge and guidance through the ethical and legal maze of the foundation have been invaluable. Dr. Castro has given us an unlimited access to the wisdom and experience he has accumulated during his years of devotion to the alumni foundation. We are fortunate for the knowledge he has shared with us. We praise him for an outstanding job as chairman of the foundation for the past few years.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the executive committee members, Drs. Manlapaz, Manny Blas, Susan Perez-Suntay, Merlyn Assuncion, and Sonia Rico-Todd, as well as the 6 chapter presidents for their full support. Truly the work of the leadership has been efficient and the group's wisdom admirable. They are the backbone of our organization and they work hard to make the alumni association great. They have eagerly confronted the constant stream of new challenges that the year has brought at the same time ensure that the more mundane day-to-day tasks received proper attention. It has been my great privilege to work with them throughout the year and a joy to get to know them more personally.

Last but not least, I must also thank the past presidents many of whom serve on or chair vital committees. Their collective mentorship is vital to anyone who holds office.

This year has witnessed the enthusiastic involvement and active participation of our young members. This has given them a measure of influence in the organization which they never enjoyed before. I believe that their influence will bring a great boom to our organization and will help our ability to attract more alumni. In recognition of this, the association has not been idle. All year long, we have reached out to all alumni across the nation in pursuit of our common goals and to fortify our organization for the ordeals that lie ahead. Of paramount importance in this process is our effort to establish closer ties with our chapters whose unique capabilities when taken together make us stronger. We will continue our efforts to recruit more active members and work together to preserve our association.

Unity of purpose, membership involvement and cooperation with the chapters are all necessary for the association to reach its goals and objectives. They are not enough. The association must be on a firm and sustainable footing. We need funding to cover our administrative and project expenses. In the face of continuing inflation and economic difficulties, we cannot compromise the integrity of the association by not exerting efforts to conserve and make the necessary adjustments in our budget. Thus, the executive council reluctantly approved the needed increase in fees for our convention activities. Although the increase was unwanted, it was not unwarranted in light of financial realities. This was the only way in our view that we could generate sufficient revenue to put our organization on solid footing and enable it to fund its projects.

Alumni members differ in their personalities and opinions. There will always be some issues and situations where we do not see solutions to problems the same way. In these divisive moments, it is critical to remember what we all agree in, supporting our *Alma Mater* in every way we can!

During the last few months, my efforts have been focused on uniting our members. Unfortunately, differences in our ethnic and cultural backgrounds have caused us to become fragmented and difficult to unite. The challenge for us then is to go forward, and ever onward. We should reach out to all alumni and make them aware that the alumni association exists. We can no longer assume that it will progress by itself. As members, we must begin to assume more responsibility for its growth and progress or lose the chance of making it into a strong and progressive one. Your involvement and active participation will contribute to its continued growth.

Unity is the greatest challenge we face today. Disunity has long been our weakness. If we fail to unite, then our own demise is ushered in and our cherished pride of being alumni will be endangered. It is my hope that our members will be united. We simply cannot allow any more fragmentation to stand in the way of helping our *Alma Mater*.

It is imperative that we promote unity among all alumni members for in unity we will survive, through unity we can become strong and powerful. We know that unity alone will give us the

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(Incorporated on September 3, 1991, registered as a 501C6 charitable organization on April 30, 1993, Tax I.D. No. 52-1745846)

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# Reunion round-up

By Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, M.D., Executive Director



The success of the NYC Convention & Reunion was through the great leadership and efforts of Drs. Alex & Debbie Bobila and Andy and Amy Antonio and all members of the convention committee.

The great effort of Dr. Roger Lucas in getting good CME speakers and grants from different pharmaceutical companies contributed a lot to the funds raised for the DAP (Drug Assistance Program/Indigent Fund). The attendance at the CME lectures doubled and that of the Cuyegkeng Lecture was two and one-half times more than the best in the past. As I have mentioned in a previous email, behind a person's success is a better half, and in this instance, the great contribution of Dr. Lydia A. Lucas especially at the registration desk is much appreciated. My heartfelt thanks to my classmate Jun Ramos for making sure our CME speakers had their audiovisuals in order.

I would also like to give credit to the Souvenir Journal Committee chairperson Dr. Danny Mangunay and his better half Dr. Nora Ramos-Mangunay for the tremendous job and effort they gave in producing a very good journal and drumming up sizeable ad contributions for the DAP/Indigent Fund. Special thanks to Joe Banzon, Boni Sanchez, Ric Arayata and others who were very aggressive in getting all those ads.

In any convention, the Registration Committee is the "backbone" of the events. A big thank you to Belen Gilo and her committee members Isabel Tolentino-Mirasol, Amor Castro, Sonia Rico-Todd, Ruby Reyes, and of course, Elmer Gilo for the organizational talent in making all these numbers easily understandable. The golf enthusiasts enjoyed 2 days of golf. Thanks to Andy Antonio and Elmer Gilo.

The great success of the Welcome Fellowship Night is through the unwavering effort and skills of Drs. Debbie Bobil and Amy Antonio in negotiating for good hotel, good prices, good food, etc. They coordinated with each respective class leaders so everybody would have fun in seeing their classmates and rebuilding friendships. Our attendance almost tripled compared with previous fellowship nights. What can I say about the Jubilarian Night's Midsummer Night Swing? Everybody enjoyed the food, the dancing and all the fun!

The Gala Night Banquet Dinner/Dance was of course a success! We had 622 attendees. Even the Regent Wall Street Hotel people were amazed that the huge dance floor was completely occupied every time the 18-piece orchestra played and even during the "DJ music" intermissions. Kudos to Debbie, Amy, Lily Idanan-Caguiat, Secion Chan, Leandro Maranan, Madge Sy, Lorna Lumicao, Thelma Villanueva, Ping San Juan, Sally de la Merced and others for working behind the scene. Of course, all the beautiful decorations at all our events were the products of the talent and ingenuity of Jun San Juan.

Our emcees, Drs. Anavel Carin and Ber dela Merced made all our night events fun, funny, and enjoyable. To you both, we are proud and thankful for keeping us entertained! Thank you to Lita Isaacson and her committee for getting all those prizes. Special appreciation to Dr. Jun Caguiat for making sure that the transportation of attendees from The Ritz Carlton Hotel to the Regent Wall Street Hotel and back was smooth and "uneventful." I would also extend our recognition of the children of Jun & Yvonne Ramos, Alex & Debbie Bobila, Jun & Ping San Juan, Ber & Sally dela Merced and others for their help and contributions.

To all who in one way or another contributed to the success of the NYC Convention & Reunion, our deepest appreciation. To all our alumni who joined us in our great celebration, a big thank you and we hope that you will join us again in Chicago next year and Houston in 2005!

Last but not least, the success of the 15th annual convention and reunion lies in the leadership of the President of the UERMCMMAA, Inc., Dr. Joseph Rastrollo. I am glad and proud to be his "sidekick!"

## President's call to mission

Los Angeles (Sept. 26) For those of you who will be attending the 33rd Annual Medical Alumni Homecoming on December 15-19, 2003, we would like to extend to you an invitation to join us on a medical mission in Pampanga. The schedule of homecoming activities is in the back cover of this issue (pg. 32). The medical mission

will be from Sunday, December 21 to Tuesday, December 23, 2003. We need volunteers from different specialties. Those interested in joining, please contact any of the following: Drs. Jeff Rastrollo [rastjeph@aol.com](mailto:rastjeph@aol.com) (818-352-4345), Rolando Mendoza [GRGMendoza@aol.com](mailto:GRGMendoza@aol.com) (561-569-1259), Alex Bobila [dbob2001@yahoo.com](mailto:dbob2001@yahoo.com) (201-891-2829), **Continued on page 13**

# A thank you and a plea

continued from page 10

respectability we deserve. Is unity within our reach? Yes, yes indeed! Membership in our association is a proof of our desire to unite with a group. It meets in a profoundly positive way the commonality we share with others. A truly stable association is one built block by block, from the bottom up. It must be based on the good solid foundation of its united members. For only in unity can we be effective in serving the needs of our community and our *Alma Mater*

Our national alumni association is an organization of alumni members for alumni members. Your elected officers and past presidents are individually dedicated to the preservation of our organization. We need your involvement and participation to be effective. If divided, we lose sight of our destination, if united, we will not lose our way. Let us break the wall of animosity. Let us unite so we can stand and be strong, survive and be stable, prosper and be successful. Together in unity we will survive.

As your president, I am very interested in having your input. I encourage to be actively involved in all our activities. I would like to see more new faces in leadership roles. I plan to work closely with our officers to facilitate the success of our various projects. Please let us know about your ideas so we can enhance the growth and progress of our organization. I look forward to working with the executive officers and general membership to further enhance the image of our association. I believe we should reflect with pride our accomplishments and look with anticipation for more of them. In the next few years, it is likely that we will undergo a lot of changes. Our association has the opportunity to move forward with a strong humanitarian and educational mission. With your help and direction, we hope to be better prepared to meet the challenges ahead.

Through the years, the alumni association has enthusiastically upheld and promoted the medical center's tradition of excellence, leadership, and service in the field of medicine. Our *Alma Mater* needs our support more than ever before. As we renew our ties with her and with one another, some of us may say that the College of Medicine has seen better days. Instead of responding in frustration and despair let us, as a united and strong organization, take this opportunity to help our *Alma Mater*

Finally, as we unite and join together and celebrate this momentous occasion, let us remember what a significant journey we have already traveled together. May we look forward to yet another stage of this journey toward continued success. United we survive! Thank you.

## \* \* \* Election tips \* \* \*

Next year is an election year not just for the United States Congress and the White House but also for the UERMMMC Medical Alumni Association in America, Inc. Up for grabs are the positions of president-elect, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. They will serve for a term of two years beginning August 1st of the first year and ending July 31st of the second year (Article VII, Section 7).

The Nomination and Election Committee of the association is the standing committee empowered by the constitution to nominate "candidates whose consent have been obtained for the offices to be filled;" conduct the election including the "counting and verifying" of the votes (Article VII, Sections 2 & 4). The committee is composed of 5 members, chaired by the immediate past president (currently Dr Rene Querubin, [RE-QUE@aol.com](mailto:RE-QUE@aol.com)), two members from the

executive board and two from the membership at large appointed by the president.

"Nomination for any elective position may be offered from the floor of the convention at the time of election. Such nominees must be duly qualified to hold office in accordance with the provisions of this by-laws. Only paid members in good standing are eligible for nomination" (Article VII, Section 3). Fifty members of the association in attendance at the regular membership meeting (general assembly) constitute a quorum authorized to elect said officers (Article VIII, Section 4).

Article VII, Section 8 prescribes that the "installation of officers shall follow after the election." This has been traditionally done at the annual convention's gala night.

As of press time, no one has formally announced their intentions to run for the above offices to be contested but the New

# Alliance and friends meet

by Penny Miranda, President

The auxiliary of the alumni association known as Alliance and Friends of the UERMMMCMAAA, Inc. held its annual meeting on Saturday, August 2,



at New York's Regent Wall Street Hotel in conjunction with the recent 15th annual convention. In it, the importance of recruiting more members from among the spouses of the medical alumni was reiterated. Plans were also drawn up for next year's activities during the 16th convention in Chicago. In New York, a silent auction was again conducted to raise funds for the Alliance.

A plea from the officers goes out to the non-alumni spouses (both male and female) of UERMMMC medical alumni to join the Alliance and help make it a more viable organization. They are encouraged to be dues-paying active members and to help prepare for next year's silent auction. Alumni and their spouses are asked to donate items for the silent auction.

They are asked to get in touch with either Penny Miranda, president (818-482-0188 or email [alexismir@aol.com](mailto:alexismir@aol.com)); Odette Blas, president-elect (630-986-8283, email [mlblascap@aol.com](mailto:mlblascap@aol.com)); Esther Querubin, secretary (440-988-2265, email [reque@aol.com](mailto:reque@aol.com)); or Violeta Rigor, treasurer (502-228-2798, email [bmrigo01@louisville.edu](mailto:bmrigo01@louisville.edu)).

Annual membership dues of \$25 may be sent to the Alliance treasurer Violeta Rigor at 6801 Shadwell Place, Prospect, KY 40059.

York convention was abuzz with a few possibilities. To enlighten us some more, here are the officers' duties (Article VI, Section 8): *president* CEO of the association, presides at all executive council and general membership meetings, appoints nearly all standing committee members, ex-officio member of the alumni foundation board of trustees, *vice-president* acts as president in the former's disability and other duties vested by the executive committee; *secretary* keeps accurate minutes of meetings & record of membership, corresponds, *treasurer* collects & disburses funds.

# Treasury Notes



by Sonia Rico-Todd, M.D. '77

## Statement of Operations (Checking Account)

Balance on December 12, 2002		\$31,953.09
Receipts:		
1 Membership dues	\$ 400.00	
2. Northeast chapter refund	14,097 70	14,497 70
Expenses:		
1 Treasurer's refund	25.00	
2. Newsletter	2,500.00	
3. NY convention	4,495.20	
4. Copying	5.02	
5. MARVADC	338.60	
6. Donation to foundation	5,000.00	12,363.82
Balance as of September 18, 2003		\$34,086.97

## Statement of Condition (As of September 18, 2003)

Assets:		
1 Three Certificates of Deposit	\$19,473.44	
2. Office machines	4,500.00	
3. Checking account balance	34,086.97	
Liabilities:	3,500.00	
Net Worth	54,560.41	

*All of the above are unaudited*

## President's call . . . From page 11

Edgar Banez [ECBanez@msn.com](mailto:ECBanez@msn.com) (818-882-4767), and Henry Yanez [yanezhenry@hotmail.com](mailto:yanezhenry@hotmail.com) (011632-931-8368).

Thank you. Jeff

Sept. 28. In a related news, Dr. Henry Yanez who is coordinating the medical mission in the Philippines with local authorities said in an email that he is awaiting the list of doctors who are coming and would like to help participants update their licenses to practice medicine through the Professional Regulation Commission. It would help to know how many are coming so board and lodging can be arranged ahead of time, he added.

Meanwhile, in a phone interview, Executive Director Irene I. Manlapaz said that the alumni association is earmarking \$5,000 from the administration budget approved at the annual executive council meeting for the medical mission, the very first time that the national association is directly supporting a chapter project of this kind.

Manlapaz also confirmed in the same interview that on September 16, she authorized the release of \$5,000 to the alumni foundation for the purpose of funding a request of Philippine alumni association president, Dr. Lydia Pine-Taneco '77 for a defibrillator for the UERMMH's emergency room. Taneco forwarded such a request for funding on September 5, 2003 using the prescribed request format taught by former foundation chairman Dr. El Castro at the seminar he had conducted at the center in April this year

# Roll Call

We salute and thank all the classes that attended the convention and supported all events. *Mabuhay!*

1961 - Roberto Bacani, Rene Buenvenida, Wilmer Heceta, Rogelio Lucas, Lydia Arayata-Lucas, benjamin Lumicao, Eddy B. Zeidenberg, Eduardo Pavon, Andres Alisago, Jr., 1962 - Jose Banzon, Melchor Garcia, Cesar de Guzman, Elisa Gueco, Emmanuel Maniago, Eva Murcia, Rosario Pajares-Fernando, Benjamin Rigor, Eve Selerio, Manuel Alafriz, Rizalina Ago-Turla, Leticia Yap-Alafriz, Elisa Tan, Vicente Uy, , 1963 **ruby** - Johnny Alvarez, Gaspar Barcinas, Lambert Belandres, Leonora Bonagua, Victoria Camacho, Elsa Fe Canton, Perla Castor, El Castro, Annie Cinco, Romeo Divinagracia, Leonides Dizon, Jose Gueco, Amelia Jacang, Nora Jose, Cornelio Katubig, Alfonso Lopez, Jr., Carmela Lugue, Amado Lugue, Benjamin Maldonado, Leonora Manzano-Dantas, Estelito Moraleja, Feliciano Navalta, Jr., Bienvenido Ortega, Sylvia Pagulayan-Guballa, Natividad Palacio, Alberto Palacio, Teodoro Parrero, Maximiano Rallon, Rolando Santos, Pedro Simon, Roger Sion, Ricaredo Suyao, Elna Tamayo-Prado, Rose Marie Tandoc-Tansiongco, Priscilla Toledo, Erlinda Valdellon, Felix Vergara, Jr., Gemo Wong, Cecilia Ynares-Genato, Ramon Alcalá, Jr.; 1964 - Elsie Castrence, Mercedita Conanan, Aurora Maldonado, Nely Recano; 1965 - Edna Angeles-Butaney Praxedes Antolin-Cruz, Lila Butler, Sofronio dela Vega, Mario Ines, Francisco Rabadam, Rogelio Sion, Rodolfo Velasco; 1966 - Rosario Dancel-Sion, Pablo Ibarrola, Gregoria Lagrimas-Vasquez, Aurora Lao-Carino, Renato Punsalang, Emilio Quines, Jr., Bonito Sanchez, Marcelino Sorongon; 1967 - Manuel Blas, Nelson Bocar, Delia Buenvenida, Zenaida Chugtai, Erlinda Crispin-Krishnan, Fortunato Elizaga, Rosemary Libre, Arsenio Manlangit, Wilma Maniago, Rolando Mendoza, Conrad Miranda, Jr IV, De Kiam Ong, Renato Querubin, Rosalinda Raymundo, Renato Raymundo, Ricardo Santos, Eden Suguitan, Sonia Velasco; 1968 **jade** - Roberto Castrence, Jaime Cebedo, Felicisima David-Quines, Emmanuel dela Cruz, Wilfredo Dungca, Bayani Elma, Cora Iniguez-Oca, Glenn Jaucian, Antonio Ligot, Teofila Malanum-Santos, Mariano Nasser, Ida Tiongco, Urduja Yorro-Trinidad, Rogelio Villaruz, Augusto Zablan; 1969 - Nestor Alabarca, Angeline Ituriaga, Lee Razalan; 1970 - Daniel de Guzman, Luzviminda Pinpin-Jocson, Jane Punsalang, Araceli Sanchez-Alcid, Angelito Tan, Rey Villanueva, Lito Fajardo; 1971 - Neda Ballon-Reyes, Isabelita Barnachea-Casibang, Vincent Casibang, Victorio O'Yek; 1972 - Vicente Carbonell, Jose de Leon, Carlos Gotardo, Marile Narciso-Hoffman, Vicente Narciso, Oscar Pizarro, Arturo Sabio, Jay Seldera, Linda Villanueva, Manuel Vivero; 1973 **pearl** - Agnes Abellera, Jose Almeida, Deborah Ames-Bobila, Andres Antonio, Amelita Aban-Antonio, Abdias Aquino, Ricardo Arayata, Eliseo Arevalo, Jr., Roy Baldomero, Manuel Banzon, Andres Borrromeo, Cynthia Libunao-Binoya, Edgardo Binoya, Alexis Bobila, Isaac Caburao, Juanito Caguiat, Anavel Carin, Epifania Miranda-Caturay, Mary Jane Chu-Hayashi, Luzminda Concepcion, Lilian Movida-Dalida, Jean Mosquito-de Guia, Danton de Guia, Silvestre dela Cruz, Bernardo dela Merced, Eliezer de Leon, Myrna Sangalang-de Leon, Samuel Dona, Zenaida Eclarinal, Ronaldo Fernandez, **Continued on page 20**

# Southern California Chapter MARVADC Chapter



Chapter President Dr. Ed Banez '76 added to the report of Dr. Joseph Rastrollo published in the convention issue that in addition to the medical mission in Laoag, Ilocos Norte and Vigan, Ilocos Sur conducted in collaboration with the PMA of Southern California last January, the chapter also paid a courtesy visit to UERM. They met with P.O. Domingo, Vice-President Fernando Sanchez, Jr., Dean Erlinda Valdellon and College Secretary Florina Estrada. They talked about doing more medical missions with the joint participation of the medical center.

In a conversation few weeks after the convention, Banez said that the chapter has already finalized plans for a one-day medical mission in the UERMMH-Out Patient Clinic on December 21 before proceeding to Pampanga for two more days of rural mission. More doctors are needed for this trip, he said. He also would like to remind those interested in joining to kindly have their Philippine licenses updated by the Professional Regulation Commission which is a requirement now for missionaries. To facilitate this he advised anyone going to have 1" x 1" passport pictures ready along with the expired license card. There will be a fee assessed by the PRC for this.

On September 7, 2003, the chapter held a general membership meeting to finalize plans for a renewed membership drive, inaugural ball and fundraiser on March 20, 2004, and a bid to host the 2006 18th alumni convention in Las Vegas. The incoming president of the chapter is Dr. Ananias Ebilane '73, an internist from Palos Verdes.

## Florida Chapter



The chapter needs to grow and encompass the Southeast United States. This was the gist of the report of chapter president Dr. Roly eMendoza '67 to the executive council on August 2nd. Moves are afoot to recruit alumni from the Deep South east of the Mississippi in order to reorganize the Florida Chapter into the Southeast Chapter. This is very much in line with President Rastrollo's agenda of strengthening current and organizing new chapters. Mendoza also is involving the chapter in planning for medical missions by the national organization in addition to the solicitation for cardiovascular equipment which is already underway. Currently the chapter lists a total of about 50 members. Records show that the inclusion of the other states in the region would swell its ranks by more than 200 graduates.

The chapter has been so busy since the inauguration of Dr. Renato (Ric) Flores '79 as president last May. That induction ball netted the chapter a comfortable sum and enabled it to donate \$5,000 to the alumni foundation toward Dr. Flores' top priority projects of charity patient support and journals for the medical library. The right picture shows Flores handing the check to new alumni foundation chairman Dr. Bayani Elma '67, also of the MARVADC chapter.



Then the members went to work and updated their membership rolls. They have transmitted this list to the national association prior to the New York convention. Shortly before that they accepted the honor of hosting the first strategic planning session called by National President Rastrollo in the wake of the intense discussion among alumni across the country on quality education issues (see pages 7-8). Of course they were a big group at the gala, being made up of many Class '79 members who will be celebrating their silver jubilee in Chicago next August. They have gatherings where they talk about business, alumni matters, and food. Feeling the excitement at the New York convention, a few had expressed the idea of hosting the annual convention and reunion in their area. The soonest they can get a crack at it is in 2007, the 50th anniversary of UERMMMC, the 19th of the alumni association. Let's hear it MARVADC!



The dust has not settled yet in New York. Everyone is winding down from the high that was Lower Manhattan. Members are still sorting out the numbers. No

# Northeast Chapter

at Sloan-Kettering making war against incurable diseases, at the UN searching for peace and brotherhood.

words can describe the elation of those who attended. The great sense of pride and accomplishment rightly belongs to the chapter. Strong belief in the cause powered the commitment of members, thus, their hard work and awesome success.

New York has become America's mirror of late. Barely a week after the convention, we witnessed the great power blackout in the East. The city that never sleeps and the town where everyone seems impatient and in a hurry suddenly sends out its teeming thousands from its steel jungle walking home almost in unison to every direction yet in an orderly ant-like fashion. Then on September the 11th came the day of remembrance when people who just celebrated life in its every nook and cranny the day before gathered in a solemn dirge once more to pour out their grief and shed tears before the twin towers that are no more. The next day, they were back on Wall Street making money, greasing



the wheels of the global economy, on Broadway serving out culture, on Greenwich Village plotting the next revolution,

New York made believers out of us. Benjie Rigor was so worried about the enormity of the project in the beginning but was "overwhelmed" by its "tremendous success." He expressed his apology to Alex and Debbie Bobila who graciously accepted it. No more doubts, just faith! So did Ado Miranda who could not help but stand up from his seat to acclaim the success of the "best attended" convention he has ever seen.

What do chapter members do with all these accolades? Many just said a simple "thank you, you're welcome!" As if speaking for all the hosts, Debbie asked "did you enjoy your time?" clearly wanting to make sure that she'd do everything to make a guest feel right. Now that's good old fashioned Filipino hospitality. They have also begun to generously share their valuable experiences with the Chicago host committee to ensure its success. And many more

And above all doing them in style!

*I have a dream that someday Chicago will no longer be known as the second city but as the City of*

# Midwest Chapter

*shoulders, and the second largest city in conventions (next only to Las Vegas).*

*Broad Shoulders to lift up the Spirit which your chapter has rebuilt!* Thus wrote Chapter President and UERMMMCMAAA, Inc. President-Elect Manny Blas to the Bobilas thanking them for a job well done in New York and for the ton of ideas the latter gave the next convention hosts.

The August 5-7 16th convention and reunion is slowly but surely being put together by the chapter. Dr. Susan Perez-Suntay '77, vice-president of the national organization, has been designated by Blas to serve as the overall convention chairman, the youngest to serve in such capacity. The chapter has already been meeting and finalizing the organizational structure of the host committee. The Chicago Marriott Downtown Hotel has been chosen as the sole venue and the CME speakers being invited. There is much enthusiasm from the silver jubilarian Class '79 which will be the principal honorees for the affair.

Reservations will be taken by the hotel starting from October 3, 2003. Numbers to call: 800-228-9290 or 312-836-0100, fax 312-836-6139. Rate is \$149/night, group

Code "UERM." Here's Manny Blas' letter of invitation to us all.

*We the members of the convention committees of the 16th annual convention of the UERMMMCMAAA, Inc. together with the Midwest Chapter wish to invite you for this upcoming event to be held in Chicago, Illinois on August 5-7 2004. This date has been finalized and therefore you may now set your calendar. Please save these dates. Summer in Chicago is the time for the year and we will work hard to give you and your families a truly exciting experience.*

*All events will be held under one roof which will be the Marriott Hotel on the magnificent Mile (Michigan Ave.) The central location of the Marriott and its proximity to the city's attractions was the primary factor we considered in making the choice. In addition, our planning committee has negotiated a sweet deal in room rates.*

*So allow yourselves plenty of time next summer and come early to experience the Windy City the city with the broad*



# SRO at the Caribbean reception



They arrived from near and far registered and milled around then ate, sang and danced and laughed all through the night!



Sonia, Belen, Sabel, Irene and Amor at RegDesk



Line dancing at the center last year's pearl '72 below some RP delegates at 11 O' clock

Silver above, ruby to the right



## ... and the winners are ...



They swung the golf club, belted out their tunes, danced like pros and showed their talents!





*They partied until they really dropped! Is there anyone not smiling?*

*Many woke up late and missed the general assembly. But who cared?*

# Rubies, jades, pearls, crystals and tins shine at the Roaring 20's Swing



# The Silver Jubilarian Class of 1978

## 42 frolick in midtown, adopt UERM research

In New York, the Class of 1978 proudly came out of a 25-year shadow of quiet but determined toil in pursuit of profession and family life, with a display of happy unity and genuine loyalty. The silver jubilarians, while celebrating their milestone and receiving the well wishes of their peers, showed their goodwill by participating in all the week's events. Two have assumed leadership roles in the alumni organizations: Joe Prudencio got re-elected as a trustee of the alumni foundation and Ruby Reyes a hard-working member of the CME committee and officer of the host chapter, aside from sharing their expertise at the CME meeting itself. Before the week was over, another two (Orson Battad and Lerdo Cocal) graciously agreed to join the 'Newsletter as staff writers. Franklin de Guzman taught us group motivation when he got 42 78ers to come starting with his "Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines" call as early as two years ago in Cleveland and slowly built it up to fever pitch excitement and expectation.

They adopted the research program of the UERMMMC as their charity project. That's the way they want to be remembered. Such a choice came at the right time. In an exchange of ideas in late spring with Dr. Georgina Tungol-Paredes, head of the division of research and educational development at the center, Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, executive director, explored ways to line up alumni support for student, resident and faculty research. In 1998, UERMMMC institutionalized the annual research forum, a scientific peer conference in which 5 resident and faculty and 3 student papers are presented, critiqued and recognized. Plaques and modest cash prizes are awarded at this forum which has been held during or just prior to the alumni homecoming week every December. The best works are published in the *UERMMMC Journal of Health Sciences* (see page 9). At present, the alumni foundation donates about \$300 for these awards which when divided equally among the nominees comes up to P3,000 each. More funding of research projects especially of students is sorely needed. A research project is now a required activity in undergraduate medicine at UERM.

Speaking for his class, Dr. de Guzman thanked the alumni association and foundation especially the Northeast Chapter for "the generous time given our class" during the gala.

## We had a blast!

By Franklin de Guzman, M.D.

*There were 42 classmates who showed up in New York for our 25th anniversary celebration. We were honored by the presence of 3 from RP: Marvin Basco alone, Cirilo Galindez and Butch Tamesis and spouses. Here are the event as they unfolded in the Big Apple from Thursday, July 31st to Sunday, August 3rd.*

**Thursday, July 31, 2003.** *We started checking in at the Marriott Grand Marquis at Times Square. A few of us arrived a day earlier for some shows on Broadway. Soon after, we assembled for the trip to the Ritz-Carlton. There were lots of hugs and kisses as we converged at the hotel lobby. We were so noisy, evidence of not seeing each other for a long time. We took a limousine ride to the Ritz and went straight to the ballroom where hundreds had already gathered, eating, drinking, dancing and reminiscing about the good old days at UERM. During this welcome reception, classmates and families joined in the talent show. Marti Menez brought the house down with his rendition of "Mr. Lonely!" The daughters of Adele Tabo-Munsayac, Joey Prudencio and Glenn Perez shared the 1-2-3 prizes in women's singing and Joey Prudencio himself played the accordion. Though the festivities ended at midnight we stayed till 3:00 AM at our "Class Suite" practicing our dance number for the gala. Others kept up till 4:00 AM and had "breakfast" across the street on Broadway.*

**Friday, August 1, 2003.** *This was shopping and exploration of Manhattan day for spouses and families, that's why we decided to stay where the action was Times Square. For us, this was CME day. We occupied 2 round tables during the Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture. We attended the lecture of Joey Prudencio on prostate cancer. Too bad, Ruby Reyes' lecture was held in the morning when classmates were still in bed or taking cabs or the subway from midtown. Many of us took the subway back, after the lectures. That night, we held an exclusive Class '78 party at the 9th floor of the Marriott. There was a DJ, cash bar and good food for everybody. There was dancing, singing, gift giving, power point photo and CD viewing. With all 42 of us showing up, it was so much fun with everybody smiling. We took many pictures inside and outside the ballroom until about 1:30 AM. Some spent more time at our suite until about 4:00 AM.*

**Saturday, August 2, 2003.** *We had an early morning on-site practice of our presentation at the Regent Wall Street Hotel ballroom with the help of Class '73 who were in charge of the whole affair in New York. Just imagine the ceiling or dome of this ballroom with its chandelier suspended 6 to 7 stories high above the marble dance floor. After this we ate a dimsum lunch at the nearby Chinatown then took a "beauty sleep" in preparation for the gala dinner reception. With the ladies in their formal evening gowns and the gentlemen in tuxedos and silver bowties, we took the 2 air conditioned buses arranged by Ruby Reyes to and from the Regent. The presentation of the 42 of us, the candle-light ceremony and our special dance number were done with class and elegance. We had a great evening dancing and socializing with colleagues so much so that the majority felt like coming back next year to Chicago. We left for our hotel past midnight then had a business meeting until 3:00 AM, presided by Butch Tamesis. We talked about the homecoming in Manila in December and suggested at least \$600 as the contribution from each of us here in the U.S. for it.*

**Sunday, August 3, 2003.** *We ate lunch at 11:30 AM at Sam's restaurant near the Grand Marquis. We had the place to ourselves so we had more singing and piano music well into 2:30 PM. Then we headed home. Some stayed on for late shopping and Broadway shows. We had a great time during these 4 days in New York and I can't think of anyone among us who didn't. I would like to thank all who attended our reunion especially those who came from RP and across the U.S. continent. Special thanks to Joel Pastor, Joey Prudencio, Tito Magno and most especially Ruby Reyes who took care of the "many details" of the reunion. Lastly, special thanks to my wife Sue for spending many hours on the phone negotiating with the Marriott management when Ruby got tied up with her patients. Sue so impressed the hotel management that she got an offer to work for them in New York. Of course, she declined it. Well, I hope I gave you an accurate "picture" of what transpired in the summer of 2003. WE REALLY HAD A BLAST IN NEW YORK!*



# Gala night, a touch of class!



*'Twas Lily's b-day!*



Frame by frame from left to right, top to bottom: ruby, tin, jade, '78 children, silver, silver, 1973, 1976, 1967, 1972, 1974. More gala pictures on page 24.



# Class Notes



## Semper fi Class 67

The yearly get-together of the class occurred again at the New York convention. Nelson Bocar, anesthesiologist from Indiana, was present with his wife and one of his children. Others present were: Manuel Blas, Zenaida Alderete-Chughtai, Linda Crispin-Radhakrishnan, DeKiam Ong, Eden Agustin-Suguitan, Delia Fonbuena, Fortunato Elizaga, Rosemary Libre, Arsenio Manlangit, Rolando Mendoza, Conrado Miranda IV Frank Rabadam, Linda Ramirez, Renato Raymundo, Susan Raymundo, Renato Querubin, Wilma Bontuyan-Maniogo, and Sonia Castaneda-Velasco.

For its main project, the class has been supporting the "333 Fund" known as the Endowment Fund of the alumni foundation. Also Rene and Susan Raymundo donated \$5,000 to the foundation in memory of their daughter Anna Lisa. The class had a sumptuous dinner at the Mandarin Court in Chinatown on batch night August 1st hosted by Frank Rabadam. At the gala, they continued their fellowship, picture-taking, etc. They started the ball rolling to support the Chicago convention next year when another classmate, Manny Blas will be installed as the 9th president of the alumni association. *Contributed by Conrad Miranda, IV*

## '68 jaded jedis continue the struggle

*James Cebedo turned in this update:* "Members of the Class of '68 have unanimously agreed to meet annually in conjunction with the UERM reunions and are now preparing for the Chicago meeting next year. The future plans include a class '68 sea cruise and a medical mission to Tony Ligot's hospital in Banaue. We have agreed to contribute a minimum of \$100 a year per classmate to fund these projects." *He also included this note of concern.* "Asking for help is a member of our class, a medical mission volunteer in Afghanistan. He has been held in captivity by the Taliban for the past 15 months. No ransom has been requested. The U.S. Embassy felt that he was kidnapped not for ransom but for his medical expertise. Kindly ask the readers to pray for his safe deliverance. For security reasons, we must keep his name anonymous."

## Twin Class '73 sorts out projects to support

Meeting away from the noise of the Latin Caribbean reception party on July 31st, the class took stock of the \$78,200 that they raised since their silver jubilee to ponder the question of which projects at UERM they'd support other than the anatomic and clinical skill models that they had already funded few years ago. Class leaders Eric Pua, Ely de Leon and Roy Baldomero steered the group through the maze of choices before them but were not able to reach a consensus. They agreed however to turn over the \$38,200 balance to the alumni foundation's restricted Class '73 Fund and decide its charity recipients later. They expressed the hope that the balance of their \$100,000 pledge could still be raised by class members who pledged and those who did not.

## Busy '75

Lots of good news from the class! On research, here's a bulletin from an Alexandria, Louisiana hospital: "Dr. Irene G. Ibanez-Manlapaz presented her scientific paper entitled "Evaluation of CK and CK-MB as screening cardiac markers and reflex tests for troponin -I" at the 15th European Congress of Clinical Chemistry & Laboratory Medicine held in Barcelona, Spain on July 2-5, 2003. The co-authors of this paper are Kathleen Duffy, chemistry section supervisor, Vanessa Williams-Lawson, chemistry section medical technologist and Chris Voinche, laboratory manager"

On philanthropy, class member Dr. Joselito Syfu donated a big chunk of anesthesia supplies useful to both departments of anesthesiology and pediatrics at UERMMMC. The 17-category inventory was received by Dr. Benjie Rigor, recycling for charity committee chairman of the alumni foundation in late July. UERMMH recently inaugurated a new neonatal and pediatric ICU which is expected to benefit from this donation. Thank you

## Roll Call . . . from page 13

Ernesto Fontecha, Ma. Lourdes Gaddi-Herrera, Rebecca Gatuz-Victorioso, Concita Guerrero-Gavino, Wayne Gavino, Elmer Gilo, Belen-Gilo, Evangeline Gaspar-Guzman, Valeriano Guzman, Zosimo Herrera, Lilia Idanan-Caguaiat, Teofilita Layaoen-Isaacson, Chester Kokseng, Ione Lara-Kokseng, Linda Luntao-Milan, Josefina Mangubat, Danilo Mangunay Gemelo Milan, Alberta Cataag-Olegario, Reymond Pascual, Samuel Piga, Quirino Pua, Zenaida Vasquez-Pua, Monico Rabara, Fatima Ramos, Joseph Rastrollo, Jaime Salomon, Severiano San Juan, Jr., Cynthia Silvestre-Sullivan, Washington Sumabat, Maria Luisa Sunio-Sumabat, Eugenio Sybing, Conrado Toledano, Isabel Tolentino-Mirasol, Concepcion Uy-Santos, Henry Yanez; **1974** - Thelma Calo-Villanueva, Anita Calud-Baldomero, Nena Flor Cambare-Piga, Justito Candari, Raymundo Corpuz, Renato Gega, Rodolfo Lim, Melita Mangubat-Sybing, Nora Ramos-Mangunay, Claver Soriano; **1975** - Nardo Buena, Secio Chon, Elsa P Corpuz, Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, Emiliano Ramos, Jr., Joselito Syfu; **1976** - David Austria, Renato Azcueta, Edgar Banez, Armando Braganza, Edgardo Emilia, Danilo Lumbea, Amie Malihan, Leonardo Maranan, Emil Padre, Susan de Padua, Dulce Samonte, Gloria Syfu, Herminia Tolete-Rotor, Eduardo Sinaguinan, Ruena Zarate-Paraso; **1977** - Cristina Alonzo, Clarence Amayun, Merlyn Asuncion, Felipe Banzon, Rosario Cecilio-Claravall, Stuart Goodman, Stuart Kittay, Josephine V Lim, Kourdes Maglaya-Pira, Glenn McDermott, Ashok Melwani, Charles Marks, Jesusa R. Micu, Rita A. Padilla, Bethzaida Palma-Aquino, Patrick Pham, Lydia Pine-Tansecro, Rolando Puno, Jose Quiwa, Sonia Rico-Todd, Susan Perez-Suntay, Magdalena Sy, Laurel de Padua-Weaver, Marlene Z. Robertson; **1978 silver** - Cynthia Baltazar, Orson Battad, Clemenina F. Battad, Percival Bigol, Felicitas L. Buena, Franklin de Guzman, Emerson Bueno, Leah N. Evangelista, Ramon Gomez, Grace Hwang, Elenito Lizardo, Allen Lim, Jr., Mary Lyn Lu-Espanol, Fausto Magno, Marti Menez, Sonia Mercado, Cornelio Mojica, Adele Munsayac, George Miguel, Antonio Nolasco, Ma. Theresa Pastor, Glenn Perez, Jose Prudencio, Larry Quirit, Agnes G. Quion, Daniel Quion, Ruby Reyes, Rommel Rivera, Roman Santos, Roque Tamaray, Mikio Tachibana, Jesus Tamesis, Jr., Dan Teano, Alfredo Tumbali, Gregorio Abad Santos; **1979** - Conrado Caraos, Perla Castillo-Caraos, Jose Cervantes, Jr., Rafael Climaco, Amor del Mundo, Ramon Fermin, Renato Flores, Esmeraldo Herrera, Alberto Lopez, Florentino Loya, Lorna Lumicao, Alberto Manalo, Myrna Ortega-Flores, Mary Theresa Rosales, Andrew So, Josephine So, Reuel Talangbayan; **1980** - Jocelyn Robredo Austria; **1982** - Abner Pasatiempo, Ana Maria Guanlao-Pasatiempo; **1983 crystal** - Edgardo Garcia, Pedro Palu-Ay; **1984** - Marites Ansay, Mario Lopez; **1985** - Ma. Rhodora L. Abrena; **1986** - Benjamin Greco, Ricardo Mabanta; **1988 tin** - Rachel Canseco-Berbano, Maria Rita Ana de Guzman-Tan, Casiano Flaviano, Victoria V Garcia, Agnes R. Joaquin, Catherine T Mauer, Ellaine Pingo, Nathalie B. Quion; **1992** - Cecilia Andaya; **2003** - Jonathan C. Piga.

*(The list includes only registered attendees as of July 31st. Our apologies if we miss your name. Editor)*

## '84 grad is one of New York's best

We take pride of another UERM alumna's recognition. Marilou Corpuz who practices infectious diseases at the Bronx's Mercy Medical Center made the 2003 best doctors' list of the *New York Magazine* in June along with 3 other Filipinos. Congratulations Marilou!

# Class '88, Bwakanabatch goes to New York

## by Nathalie Bernabe-Quion, M.D.



August 2 Saturday was not a typical summer day in New York. The rain fell heavily the day before, it was in the 80's and not humid. I woke up early and rode my bike past Ground Zero, Chelsea Piers, along the Hudson Rive and back. I said to myself this is a good day for a reunion.

Agnes and I hit the Chelsea Piers running. Ruth and Eric Lorico, Sandra and Toto Reyes, Maris and Roy, Ria and AC were already there. I was so afraid of starting late that I told people to come early. These guys should win the Early Bird Award. Soon came Lisa Cornel, Luz Galang, Malu Garcia, Susan Dilan, Beth Encarnacion and Rem Quejada. We had been hanging our together since the night before. Joey Baylon seemed a have a rush of bad luck. Besides getting lost in Brooklyn the night before, the battery in his van had short-circuited. Then, it was a constant flow. Vicky and Dodie Garcia did not look a year older than when I last saw them. Then, there was Cathy Turingan unfrazzled as ever even though she had just gotten off a plane from Atlanta. Next, Mimi de Guzman and Rachel Canseco came with their families. These gals should win the sexy mama awards (at least their curves were still in the right places). Then came Joy and Alaa Shalaby and her children who had given up going to violin camp so they could be with us. By this time, I was lost, there was an incessant chatter interrupted by a burst of laughter and a scream here and there. I could see more members of the NE contingent: Lolet Lopez, Betsy Suarez and Bophine Tecson. Alice Valencia, who had just resettled in New Rochelle after her waiver in Manila, came. At last the staff of Chelsea Piers took the kids to their sports program and we were left alone for even more chat on topics we could not let the children hear. We took pictures upon pictures, as if it was graduation day all over again. Our travelers from Las Vegas, Elaine and Shane Flaviano, finally came. And Eileen and JC Comia from CT. Then finally, the last to come. The New Yorker herself, Jo Samson.

Agnes was our master of ceremonies who after



Agnes is comfortable among the pearl and ruby jubilarians.

years of practice during med school could not get this group to quiet down. But we did settle down for a moment of silence and prayer for our classmates who have gone ahead of us, Molly Singson, Melissa Paulino, Vicky Hortaleza and Pinky Pineda. After which the decibels immediately rose. There was a sense of urgency to catch up 15 years in 3 hours, and there were 27 of us present. There were door prizes and we laughed at a short slide show of when we were many lbs. lighter, we did not need to color our hair or should I say when we had hair. We gave out the directory to make sure we could stay in touch. Then the kids were back, alas, too soon and it was time to leave.

I am glad we decided to set our dinner at 7:30 because even at 5 pm, I was losing steam. By the time we got to Cendrillon, I believe I was developing laryngitis secondary to acute vocal abuse. Agnes had gone to the gala ball, Malu took an early flight to return to Chicago, Sandra had left for Albany, otherwise everyone was there. Hannah Villanueva came from Staten Island, lovely as ever. The biggest surprise was who Joey picked up when he went out for a smoke just outside the restaurant. Arnold de Belen who happened to be attending a wedding in NJ! Remarkably, he didn't know the details

of the reunion, he had changed ISPs and just happened to have gone to SoHo for dinner with his wife. He kept saying "this was meant to be, this was meant to be!" Our laughter and voices filled Mercer St. in SoHo, to think, there was very minimal alcohol imbibed that night. I was afraid we would be barred permanently by the restaurant owner.

Before we settled for the night, some of us went up to the 14th floor bar of the Ritz which overlooked again the Statue of Liberty. I always thought that my coming to America was an accident, I was catapulted here, definitely not by conscious design. Likewise, my staying here had always been like a jagged pill, difficult to swallow. Like many expatriates before me, I looked at the woman with the torch and said to myself, I guess this is home.

Thank you for coming. You can call it providence but it's a good thing I listened to that burning bush (oops, we might have psychiatrist classmate who will put me on Zolofit). It was worth the extra doses of Prevacid I had to take. We could have met at a corner and it still would have been a wonderful event. Thanks for all the help and support, especially Agnes my sparring buddy throughout all this, Rem, Joey and Minette and the rest of the Baylon clan, Lisa Cornel who brought her Magic Mike, whom I would call in the middle of the night to bounce off my crazy ideas and who should run a missing persons bureau. Thanks to Maris, she tipped me regarding the Amex special, Luz, Lolet, Ria and AC, Jo sans the siopao. Of course, thanks to Dindo who was still in his honeymoon when I bothered him to scan some pictures. *Sa lahat sa inyong nagbayad nang maaga, salamat at yung hindi pa nagbayad, maawa kayo sa akin (isa lang naman).* We missed you if you did not come and definitely *napagusapan kayo.*

I hope to see y'all in Las Vegas, *maghanda kayo Shane, Elaine, Lisa and Arnold.* It will be a desert storm coming your way.



## New York 2003, my first alumni reunion by Jonathan C. Piga, M.D. '03

As I finished my medical school, many uncertainties ran through my mind. Even though I was happy with my educational accomplishments, I often wondered how capable my abilities were as a young physician. Granted, I still had to complete the rest of my examinations for ECFMG certification and also apply for a residency position. Thus, I realized that the title of "Doctor of Medicine" carried a great deal of responsibility and expectation. There was still much I had to prove to be truly called a physician.

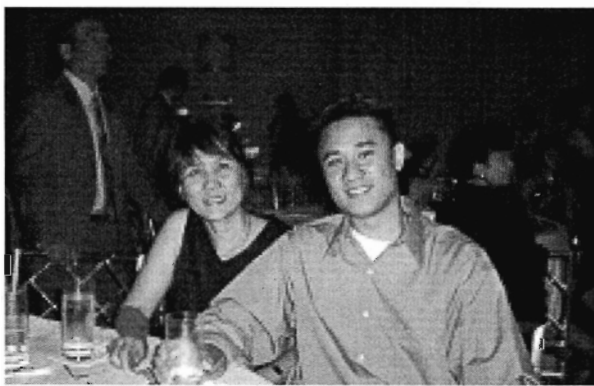
Upon the completion of my CSA exam in Philadelphia, I accompanied my father to my first UERM alumni convention. After all, here was my chance to visit New York and unwind after 3

ing. Surprisingly, a warm welcome from older alumni. I only as the sons, but also a beloved medical thought occupational physicians have through this and uncertainty greeted me as humorous re-

back, "only on paper, but not yet by skill." Her reply was, "so you think we had skill when we graduated?" Afterwards, we both had a hearty laugh.

The experience of the convention itself was very memorable. Seeing the re-unification of friends and classmates after so many years was truly a time of joy. The reunion gave everyone a chance to laugh at old experiences and say thank you to their teachers. As a young graduate, I took the opportunity to develop my own public relations. I was able to meet and talk with many alumni connected with various residency programs throughout the country. In addition, I was introduced to some of the most well recognized alumni in their respective fields. Seeing the success and prestige of the older alumni have made me optimistic about my own future. Everyone was once where I stand today but your stories have proven to me that patience and hard work pay off in the long run.

In conclusion, I saw how much everyone valued UERM because for better or worse it was a common stepping stone in all of our lives. Now a graduate myself, I will cherish my own memories of our beloved medical school. As I look towards my own future, the prestige and camaraderie that is shared by all UERM alumni is something that I will strive to attain.



Mother and son at the batch night

months of studying, I received league's welcome of the was greeted not of alumni par-graduate from a school. Then a curred to me. All probably gone stage of doubt One alumna even "Dr Piga." In a sponse, I replied



With another alum's daughter at the gala, the next generation Of the UERM reunion's excitement, Jonathan said: "It's just like senior prom many times over!"

## Dean Valdellon abruptly resigns!

Dean Erlinda Valdellon on September 15, 2003 suddenly resigned her position rather than cave in to Board of Trustees Chairman P.O. Domingo's order to fire Dr Myrna Rosel, Chairwoman of the Department of Pediatrics over what the latter considered as Rosel's "mishandling" of a pre-resident's request to attend a grandmother's birthday party.

The news relayed by Philippine alumni sources had touched off a flurry of reaction from alumni both here and at home. Valdellon's resignation, barely 17 months into her term as the 10th dean of the UERMMM College of Medicine caught everyone by surprise especially the leaders of both alumni organizations in the U.S. who had just worked with her during the alumni convention in New York. At that meeting, Valdellon had proudly reported the college's progress in the PAASCU accreditation process and vigorously lobbied alumni for their support. Alumni did not disappoint her as they took up nearly all of her funding requests (dean's wish list) at the charity auction last August 2nd.

At an emergency meeting of all department heads, Valdellon explained that the said pre-resident who was supposed to be on duty in early September had not been initially allowed to leave for such family affair but sought help from "the top." As a result, Mr Domingo "ordered" the chair of the said department to let her go. The same sources said further that the dean received a letter from pediatrics protesting "higher authority" "meddling in the affairs of the department." Somehow the note got to the chairman who castigated the dean for appointing such an "incompetent" staff member on her team and "had wanted her to dismiss" the latter but the dean refused. Another source said that in a meeting with a "select group" of faculty heads on Sept. 17, Mr. Domingo defended his actions citing corporate rules and called such criticism of him as "unwarranted" and an "insult." Nevertheless at the same forum, he expressed admiration for Dr. Valdellon's "acceptance of command responsibility" having appointed Rosel herself.

Alumni reaction ranged from disbelief, anger sadness and resignation. While some called for certain actions, many pleaded for cooler heads. Others defended Mr. Domingo as reasonable and even-handed and even blamed the pediatrics head for failing to solve the problem at its nascent stage. Alumni officers expressed "unequivocal support" for the former dean and the school's moves "toward quality medical education." Efforts by faculty to reverse the chairman's decision failed as the board of trustees ratified his decision on Sept. 18.

Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Jr., former dean, is OIC for the time being. A 6-person search panel headed by Dr. Divinagracia has been named to pore over a list of candidates to replace Dr. Valdellon who has since returned to the gastroenterology clinic.

# Silver linings in the golden years

## by Rafael S. Pascual, M.D. '64

In 2004, my wife and I will celebrate our 40th year of graduation from medical school. That is more than the life span of most people in Africa. That year 1964, was a very good year. The memories we left behind are still vivid in our minds. The Beatles, Elvis, Frank Sinatra. The peso was 1:4 and the Philippine economy was second to Japan. The prevalent health issues were communicable diseases, however, since then the incidence of cardiovascular disorders and metabolic syndromes have increased, a stiff premium to pay for globalization. I would venture a guess that more than 90% of our class came to the U.S. shortly after graduation for further training. It was easy to get a placement and some programs even offered fly now-pay later deals for those with ECFMG.

I came in 1965 after a year of residency at UERM Hospital. Several classmates and friends landed in a foreign soil for the first time in their lives, excited yet apprehensive, unsure of what to expect. I came with several classmates. We spent a few days in New York City and enjoyed the World Fair. The room at the YMCA in Manhattan, for five bucks a night, was clean. We had one suitcase each. Mine seemed the heaviest as I was always being left behind. I weighed 120 pounds at the time. It took almost forty years to gain another 20. I especially remember Ogie Evangelista, a classmate and good friend. He was always helpful, even now. After the NYC visit, we took the Greyhound bus to Connecticut before we ran out of money.

The next phase was the challenges of training, dealing with hospital administrators, fellow house staff, nurses and patients. Although we learned English in school, we had to deal with local jargons especially when taking histories and doing physicals. I learned for example that peeing was urinating. Most of us adapted well to our new environment and were able to tackle the double tasks of training and raising a family. After training and taking the specialty and state boards, the next step was establishing a practice.

My wife and I got married in 1971 the year before martial law was declared in the Philippines. She started her fellowship in psychiatry at Yale as I became a faculty member there. I eventually established a practice in pulmonary medicine in New London, Connecticut. During that time, physicians were doctors and the word providers meant fathers or other bread winners trying to support their families. Making rounds was a pleasure, nurses were happy to help doctors and knew their patients well. Malpractice premium was minimal and the coverage was per occurrence with no tail necessary.

We moved to Florida in 1978 to escape the harsh winter of New England. We were still in the "golden years" of medicine. HMO and managed



care were still to come. I practiced pulmonary medicine for 28 years and my wife psychiatry for over 20 years before we called it quits. It was a good journey for both of us. I was fortunate to be able to sell my practice for a modest price and pleased that my patients had been taken care of by an excellent physician.

After the retirement party, the next challenge was what to do with the time ahead, the so-called golden years. In practice, we encounter patients who express regrets about waiting too long before retiring and when they finally do they spend more time in a doctor's office rather than the golf course. I am not an expert and cannot give advice on how to prepare for retirement but I can only relate what we did and how. Fortunately we are in good health except for minor aches and pains and forgetting where we misplace the keys. We have no major health issues and hope to stay that way.

Establishing pension plans at the beginning of our practices made it possible for us to ease into retirement but maintaining a budget, keeping our portfolio diversified and letting it grow have not been that easy especially in the last three years of market turmoil. Most financial planners recommend planning for thirty years of retirement which stresses the importance of good investments and savings at the time of maximum productivity. I find it helpful reading financial texts and journals, similarly seeking the advice of professional money managers. But one should carefully separate the chaff from the grain so to speak. There is no better advocate for our hard-earned money than ourselves.

When people learn that we are retired, the first question they ask is "How do you spend your time?" "How do you keep yourself busy?" It's been easier for my wife to adjust than I. She is an excellent gourmet cook and enjoys making a creation in the kitchen; she is an artist by heart and can fashion a beautiful flower arrangement just as easily as a gourmet dinner for two. I cannot cook but I make coffee or tea for the two of us every morning. I also serve as her secretary.

If you don't believe me call her cell phone.

During the waning days of our practices, my wife would say that I had PMS (Physician Moaning Syndrome). It is not what you think. I was having problems dealing with managed care, HMOs and other insurance issues. I was no longer a doctor that took care of patients in the eyes of insurance companies. I became a provider that had to deal with their employees who never went to medical school. I am glad I don't have to put up with that anymore.

In the first two years of retirement, my wife observed that I was no longer suffering from PMS but from a new affliction called RAD (Retirement Adjustment Disorder). It was difficult in the beginning but gradually I was able to accept that retirement did not mean total withdrawal from meaningful activities. Rather, it is a path in life that is fulfilling. It is important that you and your wife work as a team. I learned to do simple housekeeping like cleaning, laundry, organizing stuff, and eventually, painting, gardening and other chores. It has been rewarding to see things that you have done no matter how simple they maybe. I don't play golf but we try faithfully to spend at least an hour three times a week at the gym, which we both enjoy. We have done some traveling with friends and relatives allowing for quality time and bonding. Also, retirement has allowed us to improve our computer skills, volunteer for hospice and other community organizations, and to enjoy reading and spending time at the library to keep the neurotransmitters going. We keep up with CMEs and maintain our licenses in case we have to go back to work. We deal with the issues of aging, long-term care insurance, social security (we took it at 62), Medicare and supplemental insurance.

To me medicine remains one of the best and most noble professions. Let us not discourage our children from pursuing it. However, we have a problem and the system needs major surgery. As the richest nation on earth, America should not let 42 million people without insurance nor the elderly make the hard choice between the next meal and prescription drug. When we are forced to quit or scale back practice because of unaffordable malpractice insurance, we are not serving patients well. I don't know what the future of medicine in this country will be but to those who are still in the trenches defending the Hippocratic principles, keep the spirit up and the good work going!

Finally, to paraphrase the great general, old doctors never die, they just fade away. For this old foggy to the old homeland where he will keep the silver polished along the golden pond

# more photos



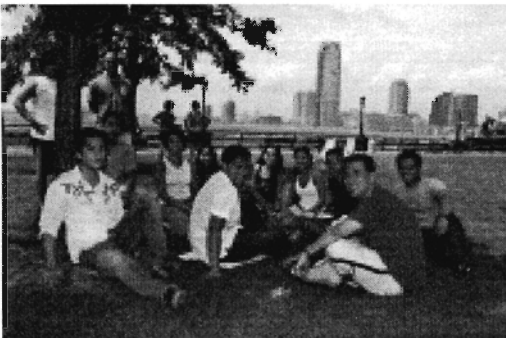
From L to R, T to B: Secretariat, Ida with alumni officials after her lecture. Franklin & Sue & 77ers, the 68ers, the

Chorus Line, '78ers dance number, Class '77 Debbie. Irene & Zeny, Urduja, Rudy & wife, Jocelyn & '80 on deck.

They continued the fun for just a while more, in family picnics, class outings and . . .

# the aftermath

. . . more meetings, echats, caucuses, even brainstorm, as if to prepare for a tempest ahead . . .





# An Open Letter to the Alumni

*The following was handed to me by Dean Erlinda Valdellon at the annual executive council meeting of the alumni association in New York on August 2nd. It is in response to the issues raised on the previous newsletter issue, and some letters to the editor (pages 26-27). It is our hope that we lend it not just our respectful attention but more so embrace it with our grateful acceptance especially during this trying times at UERMMMC (page 22). Boldface mine. Ed.*

My dear fellow alumni.

It is with great trepidation that I write this letter on the occasion of the 15th Annual Convention and Reunion of the UERMMMCMAAA, Inc. and the Alumni Foundation. The very difficulties that I experience at this moment stem from the fact that, perhaps, instead of solving some important issues, I could create more misunderstanding, confusion or even open wounds which may have already healed among us.

Our *alma mater* has undergone rapid development and differentiation in the last five years since the implementation of the innovative curriculum using the problem-based learning strategy. It seems that while the university is slowly and progressively responding to the changes in both its internal and external environment, there are certain elements within and outside the organization that has failed to gain perspectives on the events which are moving in and through them; and hence their attitudes and actions have been, to a certain degree, unable to contribute to shaping an important milestone in the history of the *alma mater*.

First and foremost, there are two issues that have been tormenting our organization and even the relationships between the alumni and the academic community. **One, that the quality of medical education has been perceived to have deteriorated.** To a certain extent, I do not consider this as a serious problem. Many of the alumni have joined hands in trying to improve the quality of education. They have provided human as well as fiscal or material resources to beef up our capabilities and strengths in order to fulfill the vision and mission of the university. In essence, this issue is already being adequately addressed. We are currently monitoring the outcome of the strategies that we have formulated to address it. Let us be optimistic and let us remain steadfast in our pursuit of academic excellence.

**Two, many of our alumni have unresolved "perceived injustices" committed against their person during their undergraduate medicine.** This has prevented them from fully collaborating in activities jointly held by the local and the USA-based alumni organizations.

Furthermore, the pain and anguish of those who suffer fester like a sore wound. Sadly, they have become a perpetual source of frustration, displeasure and unhappiness. Many have even labeled themselves to be "victims" and have launched a constant crusade to institutionalize a subculture of martyrdom. Here, all the innocent "victims" have, at one point in their life, been physically and verbally abused, persecuted and brutalized emotionally and morally assaulted by their superiors and mentors. The



scourge of tyranny, if I may say. And I am writing this open letter to propose a solution to this stubborn issue.

**Certainly, I would like to resolve the second issue so that you and I can translate our collective experience, whether good or bad, into something more constructive.** I understand that some of the alumni are going to convene to talk about it. They would try to look for solutions and ways to alleviate or relieve their long-standing suffering. The brainstorming session by this group is obviously already a part of the solution. But I must warn you, that, even if this seemed like a rational "solution," I honestly do not think that you can actually discuss its implementation or even the consequences of the proposed remedy. And why did I say that?

**I am afraid to say this, but, I think that we can never resolve the issue because it is beyond our powers to repair**

**the damage that has been done to the psyche of our alumni.** Let us try to forget the past and begin anew. For as long as we carry this "heavy baggage" in our hearts, we can not move on. There is conflict. The conflict is clearly manifested in situations where ideas, feelings or emotions are perceived as incompatible; that is, people become angry with another. Other manifestations include apathy or indifference; and, what I consider extreme is the biased perception and/or gross distortion of reality. If indeed UERMMMC has a latent culture of violence, brutality, or lack of civility, how come it has remained a bastion of excellence in terms of medical education and health care services? How can our graduates possibly become respected leaders in our country and even in foreign lands? No man can thrive in a learning environment that is oppressive and savage.

I do not intend to make a mockery of your problem nor undermine the gravity of your grief and pain. **Truthfully and sincerely, I would like to offer my apologies in behalf of those mentors or people who made your life difficult in the past.** Forgive them and let us move on. Let us adopt a more positive attitude and let us work together towards the accomplishment of our goals. Let us stop scoring points and try to beat one another, e.g., the so-called "non-victims" vs. the "victims."

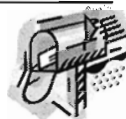
Let us realize that our university has to respond to the challenges of the Third Millennium. We need to respond to the changes taking place around us, or we will become obsolete. We will perish. Yes, you are valuable as a human being and you have rights that ought to safeguard your dignity, honor and self-respect. It is sad if you choose to continue to dwell on this problem for as long as you live. I am afraid that you will simply languish—angry, hateful, sorry and with a profound contempt for people who have long been dead or who will soon be dead anyway.

**Let us look at the brighter side. Let us forgive and forget.**

Continued on page 27



# Letters to the Editor



## From Maryland

Bravo! Bravo! Bravo! What a superb news-letter issue! I don't know what other praises I can heap on you except to congratulate you for the hard work and supreme efforts for you to come out with this issue (I received my copies today). Please let me know when you want to come out with the next issue so I can contribute.

Bayani Elma, M.D. '68

(Thank you Ed)

## From the Website ([uermalumni.org](http://uermalumni.org))

Class '77 has got it right, pledging \$100,000 for scholarship based on academic excellence. Yes, our Alma Mater needs that G-String Fund.

In our November 2002 alumni newsletter, our editor asked if the UERMMMC is competitive. I too was floored by the 66% board passing for Class 2001. The internet won't see this kind of newsletter article about the state of our Alma Mater in our site I thought. Bad for our image. But the more I thought about it, the more I am convinced that this just might be the kind of news to broadcast to "shock and awe" everyone who consider themselves alumni (translation: someone who care sand holds no secret desire to see UERM bottom out) of that once great school.

The next question I asked myself is what can the alumni association-foundation do to reverse this trend? I think about the many foundation projects of books, computer programs, professorial chairs, equipments, etc., which are laudable efforts on the part of the association-foundation to improve our Alma Mater's lot. But I keep having this uneasy feeling that our efforts are expended on too scattered a direction and needs refocusing to attract the right kind of students that would bring honor to our school and start the long lines of desirable applicants that ends in Sta. Mesa's doors. What is perhaps telling is in the maiden issue of the foundation newsletter. It was a report on the partial tuition scholarship award being raised from \$200 to \$300 per recipient but it was emphasized that it was not for academic excellence but for academically deserving but financially handicapped students. I still am not sure what the phrase really means. Did we unwittingly fund the downward spiral?

What's that dictum again: a chimp in a

tuxedo is still a chimp? Maybe we should stop thinking about that tuxedo for a while and focus on the chimp inside that tux instead.

So then what is the bottom line? The bottom line is the bottom line—the money the foundation has for scholarships. The foundation needs to refocus that. Add to that a one-time donation to the foundation of just one hundred dollars from each alumnus to get us out of this downward spiral. Four thousand plus alumni sacrificing a Friday night out or two with the family or four hundred thousand dollars plus. Mate that with a foundation directive for one hundred thousand dollars to go to a first year scholarship for the next four years, to the first one hundred first year applicants with a grade point average above the academically deserving but financially handicapped standard for a better freshman pool.

We who have been in the trenches know that a solid grounding in the history, physical exam, and a minimum of lab/technology help is all that is required from four years of medical school. The real learning for doctoring in the trenches comes after that. What is important for the Alma Mater after the fourth year is the student's book learning and which school gets the honors and a second look by the cream of the first year applicant pool each year to replenish the winning pool.

An Einstein in G-strings will beat the chimp in a tuxedo anytime. The Alma Mater needs the G-String Fund and Class '77 has the foresight to respond.

Dave Roble, M.D. '65

## From Maryland

Nothing can bring closure to the history of the past. It is true that many can almost come to a point that you can say "forget and forgive," maybe as a class because it seems like a ritual. Strict disciplinarian so a student will learn or become a better physician? I do not think so. Each individual student/person reacts differently to the ordeal of "making" it through those attendings as well as residents. Many of our class ('71) cannot

forget and could hardly forgive. We could talk about it when we are together and those experiences made us a unique group, very loyal to each other but listening to many of us, lost a lot of feelings towards the institution that gave us our title. This must be the reason why there are only very few of us who come together for conventions. Human beings have feelings and long and unpleasant memories could fester for ages. The hurt even if one tries to bury it in the deep recesses of the mind gets triggered to escape to remind an individual of those unwelcome and unpleasant memories. To many in our class it still hurts.

Isabelita Barnachea-Casibang, M.D. '71

## From Maryland

That was a great issue (convention issue). The best so far and the others were quite good too. You might get a lot of flak for it but that only means that you are doing your job. As they say, it goes with the territory. I'm sure there will be praises as well as critiques. That means they are reading our stuff which is very hard nowadays with so many competing for everyone's attention. We should put the issue to rest by asking or even demanding from Dr. Divinagracia and Dean Valdellon what they have put in place to correct this rather dark history of our center.

I hope they answer some of the more insightful questions of Boy Sion as well as comment on the suggestions of Vic Dulay. We need to assign some "neutral" person perhaps from your class or mine to ask them during the official meeting. Ask them concretely whether they acknowledge the administration's fault and, if so, what they are doing about it. I do not believe that ignoring or denying that such things did happen will do anything. This has been a typical Filipino cop-out, the reason why if you read the problems of the Philippines as outlined by Rizal, we have the same problem now, only multiplied many times over.

I also do not believe that you develop character by allowing yourself to suffer needlessly if you do not believe that you deserve a punishment. Maybe the servile, mendicant character which some Filipinos



# Letters to the Editor



so wrongly call "mabait," the non-complainers, the get-alongers, the yes-men. Of course, to their superiors, they are great. So are slaves and subjects. I also do not believe that those who were lucky not to have been recipients of injustice, even if this had happened a long time ago, has any right to speak for those aggrieved. I have had my say as usual, so to end, congrats again.

Roberto S. Castrence, M.D. '68

## From Cyberspace

I would like to comment on the article of my best friend Victor Dulay, my classmate at Pio Del Pilar Elementary School Class 1950-56, *Extra Duties: Piece and Peace of Mind*. I believe in discipline and punishment of any wrong-doing of interns or clerks. The best crops of graduates are just like in the military school. My son graduated from West Point Class 1993 and they have the worst punishment you can think of. Anyway, UERMMMC was branded as a "military medical school" because of the duties imposed by power drunk residents who almost equal military school seniors! In simple terms punishment probably helped us to become disciplined and good all-around physicians. I was probably the "mabait," the non-complainer, the get-alonger, the yes-man. The training and schooling that we experienced at our beloved UERMMMC was the best in the whole wide world. Finally, I agree that extra duties, special duties, and extensions were too much to handle. To bring closure to this "Alumni Unfinished Business," a formal apology to the entire alumni probably would not happen. Big kudos to Vic, Totoy, and Sam for the excellent and sensitive topic. I hope and pray for Class 1968! Thanks.

P.S. I did extra and special duties too!

Romy Parungao, M.D. '70

*(Romy, thanks for your comments. Let me see if an older man can convince you otherwise. The military man and the doctor are two different animals. The doctor's mind should be open and skeptical like any scientific mind should be. To be able to analyze the patient's problems and be able to adjust and change his thinking depending on new findings. The military man, on the other hand, works best when he follows orders without questions. A questioning military*

*man does not stay alive very long. So training to be a physician and training to be a military man should not run along the same lines. An analogy I would like to use is the use of music in dancing. Elsie and I look good (actually Elsie looks good and I don't care) when we dance the argentine tango to the right music but look very foolish and actually stupid when we do the same dance to a tango that was meant for international, American or even Philippine tango. Can't make it any clearer than that. Associate Editor Totoy Castrence)*

## From Maryland again

I was just re-reading the newsletter one more time and the article on "01 bets raise board" caught my attention. On the seven classes that have placed bets in the top ten of the boards: 1971 (no. 1). This is incorrect. There were two in the top ten. Among the regular board takers, one was number 8, Vincent, and in the Octoberian batch Dr Helen Torres was number 1. Just want to point that out to you for the 1971 graduating class.

Isabelita Barnachea-Casibang, M.D. '71  
*(Thank you Vickie. I missed the news about Vincent during that year I was the Aesculapian editor then and it was Helen's feat that I headlined in the graduation (final) issue. The copy is still on file at the library. At any rate, I am very proud of your class as I did then! Ed.)*

## From Houston

I have been informed that the 2005 convention will be in Houston and I would like to help in any way I can since this will coincide with our 40th class anniversary (Class 1965). I am semi-retired and have been in Houston since 1976 so I am very well familiar with the town. In fact, we hosted the 1983 APPA convention. Let me know if you need any help. I will try to make plans for our class only for now. Thanks.

R. Tandoc, Jr., M.D. '65

*(Dear Dr Tandoc, your help will be very much appreciated. Tom Lumicao will be our overall convention chairman. Our current editor is also trying to get as*

*many alumni from Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma involved. If you know of any other alumni from the Houston area, please let them know that we also need their help to make our 2005 convention a success. Tom should be starting to form his different committees and we will inform you of any updates and scheduled meetings. I am glad to know that our ruby jubilarians in 2005 will be a big force in Houston! Executive Director Dr Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz)*

## Dean Valdellon's letter continued from page 25

Let us take advantage of this annual event to reconcile our differences, celebrate a new beginning and work towards the accomplishment of our common goal. Let us begin to shape a new generation of doctors who are more compassionate, ethical and magnanimous in spirit. Let us transcend human frailties, personal inclinations and a cold-blooded penchant for retribution. Let us err on the side of charity and may God have mercy on them! **Let the greatness of our love for one another bring us to greater heights of man's humanity!**

Thank you very much. I remain your humble servant

Sincerely yours,

Erlinda V Valdellon, M.D. '63  
Dean, College of Medicine  
2-VIII-2003

*(Thank you very much Ma am. Editor P.S. Six weeks after she wrote this letter Dr Valdellon resigned as dean over the issue of command responsibility involving the pediatric department head's handling of a disciplinary problem with a "pre-resident." See pg. 22. Ditto)*

## Important Websites

UERMMMC: [www.uerm.ph](http://www.uerm.ph)  
UERMMMMCMAAA, Inc.  
(association) or UERMMMCA-  
FUSA, Inc. (foundation).  
[www.uermalumni.org](http://www.uermalumni.org)  
The Aesculapian. <http://geocities.com/aesculapianonline/start.html>

# Editorials

## Bravo, New York!

The success of any convention requires three essential ingredients. Foremost is a clear purpose for holding it. Next is its efficient planning and implementation. Third is its wholehearted reception by its constituents. They are all dependent on each other in that order.

The New York convention celebrating our 15th reunion had all such ingredients. At the outset, the leadership of the national alumni association and the host chapter carefully defined the objectives of the gathering. As a matter of fact, aside from being faithful to the constitution's mandate to foster unity among alumni and loyalty to and support of our *Alma Mater* it has dedicated the fund raising aspect of the convention to drug assistance for charity patients at UERMMH, a stroke of marketing genius that will not only help charity patients obtain affordable care but also provide students enough clinical materials.

Because of this clear vision and purpose, all efforts in planning were effectively directed by the organizers towards these twin mandate. And with dogged zeal they pursued them. From their negotiations with hotels and other convention service providers to solicitation of ads for the souvenir journal, exhibitors, and CME sponsors, they displayed this fiscal responsibility and acumen. Yes, along the way, they had their difficult moments and disagreements yet they stayed focus on the prize they sought, a renewed spirit of unity, loyalty and generosity.

Because of such determined implementation of their strategy inspired by their defined purpose, the hosts tapped a gusher of enthusiastic support from across the alumni membership spectrum. We saw this in the strong contingent of this year's jubilarians as well as the excited participation of younger alumni led by the first-time tin and crystal celebrants. We saw that in the above capacity attendance at the CME, reception and gala parties.

Was the spirit rebuilt? A loud yes! Did we foster unity and loyalty? Yes, but we could do better. Did we raise the amount our leaders envisioned to help charity patients and students with? Yes, and we have also ensured the soundness of the association's fiscal health. Let us continue to build on what we have toward stronger and collaborative alumni association and foundation, and eventually a more successful UERMMMC. New York showed us how!

## Lamentations

To say that U.S. alumni are disturbed by recent events at the medical school concerning the dean is an understatement. In the same breath, to say that they are calm is an overstatement. To hear of Dean Valdellon's sudden resignation is stunning enough but to hear of the circumstances of why she did it is even more unsettling. As we piece together the facts of this event as best we can from the perspective of various observers, we see some fundamental weaknesses in the medical center.

First, patronage is still evident. Favoritism has no place in an esteemed institution such as a medical school. Merit underpinned by a strong culture of hard work and ethical sense must continue to be cultivated and upheld up and down the hierarchy and shielded from all corrosive influences. Second, freedom of expression is not yet fully guaranteed. The strength of any democratic institution particularly that of an academic one, public or private, rests in its constituents' ability to seek redress of their grievances in an unfettered atmosphere of free speech so that everyone acquires proper disposition to arrive at an enlightened decision without duress. Third, the ownership still has much to learn in dealing with its employees, physicians in particular. There are principles and standards that doctors never compromise about not out of intransigence but out of moral conviction. The ownership must expect the same from all the others so that it can genuinely appreciate their needs and aspirations and enable itself to create a climate of goodwill in the campus that brings about not only "industrial peace" but a loyal, productive and competitive workforce, professional or otherwise.

Ironically, this development in September coming at the heels of an emotional high such as New York revealed these reassuring realities. One is that Dean Erlinda Valdellon and Dr Myrna Rosel, pediatric chairwoman, taught us that there are values that are worth resigning and fighting for. Two, when the chips are down, a good leader does not abandon the foot soldier. Dr. Valdellon is that kind of a leader and the center could have only benefited from such a steely resolve and leadership. Third, we the alumni, both here and at home, truly care about our school. The unity that we have displayed in support of the embattled dean and the concern for our school that we continue to nurture are indeed tangible statements to our students, young graduates and the administration alike that UERMMMC medical alumni have a very significant stake in the state of affairs and policy direction at the Center

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**to the editor-in-chief.**

## Alumni Desktop

*You'll know who your REAL FRIENDS are until you stumble and fall and till you feel their hands on your shoulders as they say "Ayan, tatanga-tanga ka kasi!"*

*ANAK: Inay, buntis ho ata ako, nahihililo ako.*

*INAY: Hindi buntis anak.*

*ANAK: Naduduwal ako Inay.*

*INAY: Hindi ka buntis*

*ANAK: Buntis ho ata ako kasi gusto ko ng maasim.*

*INAY: Punyeta! Gusto mong pitipitin ko yang bayag mo!!!!*

*Ano sa Tagalog and asawa? Maybahiay. Ano naman and kabit? May condo! RSC*

*Man: I want a birthday present for my wife.*

*Saleslady: How long have you been married, Sir?*

*Man: 22 years!*

*Saleslady: Bargain basement is on the left DKO*

*Positive Side of Life Living on earth is expensive but it does include a free trip around the sun every year; Don't cry because it's continued next page*

# Random Thoughts of Lolo Totoy

by Roberto S. Castrence, M.D.



## Ramblings on divination

I must have done something bad to Sam Piga. Maybe I bullied him as a freshman or while he was applying to medical school. If so, I am sorry I am at the point in my life where I feel I need to make some closure. Or maybe he is a closet sadist. I think I like this second explanation more. Why do I say this?

If this were not the case, why would he assign me the topic "Divining the future of UERMMMCM?" Divining? I don't even know the word. And he mentioned the emails of Ben Rigor which I have not seen and mentioned Baltimore which I was not intending to go to and then finally dropped the bomb that the original Dalupan Foundation Charter will run out in 5 years!

But I am a proud man. So I will give it a try. He specifically asked what I think our roles as alumni in the different scenarios. To make my life more difficult, which makes me think he is a follower of the Marquis, he left it up to me to figure out the scenarios. But being a proud man of the Class of '68, again he was able to trap me.

I will let my imagination run wilder than usual and invent the scenarios for you.

Scenario 1: no change from the current status. Unlikely. Scenario 2: UERM closes. New mall in Aurora Blvd. opens. Possible. Scenario 3: UERM transfers to Antipolo or better yet to Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Highly unlikely. Scenario 4: ???????

Now for the divination. We will need a big cauldron and the following ingredients: all members of the alumni foundation, all 102 pages of El Castro's epic production, Bayani Elma's secret dictionary, Lucio Tan's unwashed underwear, and P.O. Domingo's shampoo. We mix all these ingredients in our boiling cauldron and cook it for two days. We then threaten medical students to drink this concoction if they don't come up with a solution. What do you think?

Honestly though, I think all I am saying is that in this particular struggle we are mere *peons*. If we do not know what Lucio thinks the game is over. So, it is over even before the game starts. There is one thing to say though about the alumni maintaining the organization even for "social" reasons. *It is important for us to keep our friendship and fellowship alive no matter what.* To me, that's the most important. And that is another story.

P.S. Sam, sorry for using you as a sounding board. Or a punching bag. Just had to lay it on someone. Got the jolt of my life this last visit to 'Pinas. Should have known better to decompress slowly. By the way, thanks for updating me on the August 2 event (*General assembly where the report of the president of the medical center among others, was heard. See page 5. Editor*).

**Alumni Desktop** From page 28 through doors you didn't even know you over, smile because it happened; A truly left open; Birthdays are good for you, the happy person is one who can enjoy the more you have, the longer you live. REC scenery on a detour; Happiness comes

## Palawan: a glimpse of paradise

Elsie, my daughter Marcia, and I went on a whirlwind visit to the Philippines. We visited relatives and our son Miguel who is finishing his Fulbright work in Palawan. We stayed mostly in Calapan, Mindoro where Elsie's relatives are. The rest of the time was spent in Puerto Princesa.

There was nothing special about Manila or Calapan. In fact, we saw what we anxiously did not want to see: the traffic, pollution, in other words, the chaos that is now called Manila. Calapan was not much better. It used to be a sleepy typical coastal town in the province. Not anymore. People were all over the place. Traffic was almost like Manila. And hideous buildings and resorts of all kinds (mostly unoccupied) have infested its former pristine nature. It was quite depressing. And the news: coups, corruption, kidnappings, murder, war, the rich getting richer and more callous. Then came Palawan.

The trip to the islands was only a half-hour flight from Manila. The plane was clean and efficient. Landing in Palawan, we did not think or expect much. All we wanted was to see Miguel. It is only now that I realize the difference. The feeling is eerie but it is like going from regular to a slow mode on your VCR. Suddenly one notices that people are not in a hurry. The pace has slowed down.

Miguel took us to meet his friends and then to the beach. Snorkeling for me and snorkeling and scuba diving for Miguel and Marcia. That was an experience. Seeing the colorful fishes gliding gracefully, almost dancing along the corals, I thought "this must be paradise. This is it!" I don't know how an Eskimo or a desert nomad paints paradise in his mind but for this tropical old man, this is IT.

Then Miguel took us to a hilly place and showed us the view of the bay with the mountains behind. It was close to sunset. The view was indescribable. One can easily understand how nature and the religious, or is it spiritual?, merge. Here you forget about your usual cares, you forget the past and worries about the future. You are in the eternal present where you have always been but just forget. Now, have I told you about the sound of the rain or the lapping of the waves? Maybe next time.

I cannot wait till next year when we go back.

Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas  
Louisiana & New Mexico alumni,  
join the Houston host committee,  
visit the website and subscribe

[www.houstonreunion2005@yahoo.com!](http://www.houstonreunion2005@yahoo.com)  
Let's give 'em a BIG Southwest stampede!

# A plug for the foundation

by C.J.R. Miranda, IV, M.D. '67, President



There continues to be a minor confusion among alumni about the roles of the Alumni Foundation and the alumni association. This is understandable given the overlapping functions but if one looks closely, there is no overlap.

The Alumni Foundation is an independent entity with its own constitution and by-laws, set of officers and a governing board of trustees that formulates policies, procedures and programs. It has no members per se but leans heavily on alumni and the Alumni Association for support.

The Alumni Association, on the other hand, is also an independent body, with its constitution and by-laws, and whose officers run its day-to-day business, through an executive director. Presidents of the component chapters are part of the policy-making body. Membership of alumni is confirmed through the payment of dues. The association is responsible for holding functions such as conventions, continuing medical education programs, silver jubilarian celebrations and the like.

As a charitable organization, donations to the Alumni Foundation are treated as tax-exempt contributions to charity. Fees, for example, to the Alumni Association, can be tax-exempt as a business expense. Although both organizations are considered as non-profit entities, the foundation derives its charitable designation from the Internal Revenue Service classification 501(C)3. The Alumni Association, on the other hand, has a 501(C)6 designation.

At the last annual meeting of the Alumni Foundation held in conjunction with the recently concluded annual Alumni Association convention in New City, a new set of officers took office. El B. Castro,

M.D. stepped down after six years as chairman. Bayani B. Elma, M.D. was elected as chairman. Conrad J.R. Miranda, M.D. was re-elected as president. Others elected were Dekiam Ong, M.D. vice-president; Elmer Gilo, M.D. treasurer; Roy Baldomero, M.D. assistant treasurer; Rolando Mendoza, M.D. secretary; and Isabelita Casibang, M.D. assistant secretary. Rene Querubin, M.D. was elected as the new-vice chairman. Five mem-

*The real goal is 100% participation because in numbers there is power. After participation comes commitment.*

bers of the Board of Trustees were elected or re-elected for the years 2003-2006. They are Manuel Blas, M.D., Bayani B. Elma, M.D., Jose Prudencio, M.D., Renato Raymundo, M.D., and Isabelita Casibang, M.D.

Castro relinquished his board seat, and Baldomero was elected to his seat for the remainder of his term which ends in 2005.

The main foundation project, which is the development of the Endowment Fund, continues to be the main focus of its fund-raising efforts. An initial million dollar goal could help fund numerous projects. The principal

will remain intact while the interest earned will be used for such projects that may come before the board of trustees. At present, the main thrust of projects is towards "human resource" ones as opposed to "infrastructure" projects.

The goal is doable and reachable. For example, 200 alumni donating \$5,000 each will generate the projected goal of \$1 million, or 500 alumni donating \$2,000 each will generate the same amount, etc., etc.

The real goal is 100% participation because in numbers there is power. After participation comes commitment, and with that the money part should be easy. Each alumnus or alumna has his or her ever-widening circle of family, friends, and business associates. These can be tapped for donations to the foundation. How many pharmaceutical representatives are there around us who are more than willing, yes, looking for opportunities to donate funds for charitable causes.

One of the priority foundation projects for now is the development of an attractive brochure which can be distributed to our alumni who in turn can give it to anyone from whom they would want to solicit gift to the foundation. It will help explain what the foundation is all about and what projects donations support.

Our hope for the foundation is that it will always be in the minds of alumni to help and support in any way they can. Donations in cash and in-kind including monetary instruments such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, bequests, insurance policy proceeds, etc. are most welcome. Think of the endless list of future projects that you, our alumni, can bring into fruition with your support. We only ask that you participate individually.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Dr. Wilmer Heceta '61 initiated the fund in December, 1995. The donations are deposited as an unrestricted fund of the foundation for multi-purpose use: to supplement the other projects that need additional funding; to supplement the administrative and operational expenses of the foundation.

As of March, 1997, there were 55 donors with a total donation of \$17,150. Heceta hoped that enough donors would give to reach the goal of \$100,000 by 1999. As of September 2002, a total of more than \$26,000 had been collected.

## PROPOSAL:

The 333 Fund was not originally established as an endowment fund but as a "Board Designated Reserve Fund." The amount donated by donors

## 333 Fund

cannot fulfill the criteria of an endowment since it cannot sufficiently support a project in perpetuity or for a long period of time.

So the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting in Honolulu on August 1, 2002 passed a resolution designating the 333 Fund and all such donations as one fund "FUNCTIONING AS AN ENDOWMENT." As the name implies, it will function as an endowment with these proviso: (1) invested fund principal must be left intact and income from the investment will be used by the organization to achieve its mission and objectives; (2) in purpose or use, the fund is an unrestricted fund so it can support any project

program or administrative/operating expenses that the foundation approves; (3) in the event that the investment income is not sufficient to support such projects or expenses, the board may use no more than 5% of the principal.

These provisions will serve notice to donors that the fund principal is not available to cover any expenses of the foundation in 2003 to 2005. The income may however be used for operating/administrative expenses during the same period.

The board also approved a 3-year fund raising campaign from 2003 to 2005 to raise \$1 million. From 1961 to 2002, 8,620 have graduated from the College of Medicine. About 3,000 to 4,000 are in the US. The goal can be realized if only 1,000 alumni respond to the appeal for \$333/alum/year for 3 years. El B. Castro, M.D.

# Appeal for the 333 Fund

by El B. Castro, M.D. '63, Former Chairman

The UERMMMC Alumni Foundation USA, Inc. was incorporated in 1981. It is an independent entity organized exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes. The IRS has determined that it is an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c) 3. It is treated by the IRS as a public charity and not as a private foundation. Accordingly, contributions to the foundation are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

The UERMMMC Alumni Foundation was created specifically to give alumni, individuals and organizations a significant, meaningful and organized way to support the UERM Medical Center, the community it serves, and our fellowmen. The foundation has carried out this noble task since its inception.

The Board of Trustees of the UERMMMC Alumni Foundation believes that the present financial support of donors is not enough to sustain the survival of the organization and its program. In August, 2002, the Board resolved that the "333 Fund" initiated in 1995 shall function as an endowment fund. The development of this fund when fully funded will help the continuous work of the foundation.

As alumni and friends of the UERMMMC, please consider contributing to the foundation today. The special appeal form to your right identifies the various levels of support: contributor (\$25-\$99); friend (\$100-\$249); sponsor (\$250-\$499); patron (\$500-\$999); benefactor (\$1,000-\$2,499); champion (\$2,500-\$4,999); and angel (\$5,000 or more).

Individuals who cumulatively contribute \$1,000 or more from its original inception up to December 31, 2002 will be considered as members of the FOUNDERS CIRCLE and will be recognized as such. Individuals in the Founders Circle will also receive an elegant plaque for display in their office or home. Medicine classes, alumni groups, and organizations that have cumulatively contributed \$25,000 or more will also be considered as members of the Founders Circle.

Please complete the appeal form and mail it along with your donation

We hope that you will share this information with others, who like yourselves, are interested in making a lasting contribution to the UERMMMC and help it continue as one of the premier institutions of medical education and health care delivery in the Philippines.

## 333 Endowment Fund Building for the Future

Your contribution to the UERMMMC Alumni Foundation, USA, Inc. helps fund carefully screened and selected programs that support critical needs of your *Alma Mater*.

### Levels of Support for Individual Contributors

- ( ) Angel \$5,000 +
- ( ) Champion \$2,500 - 4,999
- ( ) Benefactor \$1,000 - 2,499
- ( ) Patron \$ 500 - 999
- ( ) Sponsor \$ 250 - 499
- ( ) Friend \$ 100 - 249
- ( ) Contributor \$ 25 - 99

I pledge the gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ which will be paid on the following dates: 1. \_\_\_\_\_, 2. \_\_\_\_\_, 3. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Founders Circle:** Individuals with cumulative contributions of \$1,000 or more and Medicine Class, group of alumni, and organizations with cumulative contribution of \$25,000 or more will be members of the Founders Circle and will be permanently recognized.

**Tree (Wall) of Life, Tree (Wall) of Knowledge, Wall of Honor:** The Board of Trustees of the UERMMMC Alumni Foundation in collaboration with the Medical Center will create the above walls permanently in the Medical Center to recognize and thank donors for their contribution. The Tree (Wall) of Life will recognize those individuals, class, & organizations in the Founders Circle. The Tree (Wall) of Knowledge will recognize donors who contribute \$500 or more to the annual campaign. The Wall of Honor will recognize donors who contribute \$250 or more.

**I/we have enclosed my/our contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Send all contributions to the Treasurer, Dr Elmer Gilo, 2 Deer Run, Sparta, NJ 07871 E-mail: EGIL0@atglobal.net. If you have any questions, please contact the foundation chairman or president.

( ) Please check if you do not want to be publicly acknowledged.

### THANK YOU

UERMMMC Alumni Foundation, USA, Inc., a 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit organization, founded on July 15, 1981 with Tax I.D. 13-3119113.

### UERMMMC ALUMNI FOUNDATION USA, INC. APPEAL 2003

THANKS for your contribution!

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my gift of: \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ (other)

I pledge a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ which will be paid on dates: #1 \_\_\_\_\_ #2 \_\_\_\_\_ #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to: **UERMMMC Alumni Foundation USA, Inc.** All gifts are tax-deductible.

My gift will be used for:

- |                                |                             |                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| ___ Scholarship Award          | ___ Community Service Award | ___ Library       |
| ___ Faculty/Best Teacher Award | ___ Conference Workshop     | ___ Wish List     |
| ___ Residency Award            | ___ Basic Skills Laboratory | ___ Indigent Fund |
| ___ Publication/Research Award | ___ Endowment Fund          | ___ Other         |

The gift is in honor or in remembrance of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form and your check to Elmer Gilo, M.D., 2 Deer Run, Sparta, NJ 07871

# 1963 Homecoming Parangal sa '78, '73, '68, at '63 2003 UERMMMCA Alumni Homecoming Schedule

Malugod na inaanyayahan tayong lahat ng ating Inang Paaralan, lalung lalo na ang mga kasapi ng mga klaseng nagdiriwang ng kanilang ika-25, 30, 35, at 40 kaarawan ng pagtatapos, na dumalo sa ika-35 Taunang Pagbabalik at tumangap ng masaya at taos niyang pagbati!

Experience not only the warm hospitality of our school but also of our people. Retrace your steps in its familiar halls, feel the spirit of oneness with friends and classmates where it all began, enjoy the natural beauty of our homeland, and partake of the simple joys our people at Christmastime.

Our Philippine-based alumni have lots in store for you. You can even join the carol fest or lantern parade, attend the educational symposium, or the annual research forum a week before the official festivities. Make your plans now

Jubilarians, please contact your coordinators for your class activities: **Franklin de Guzman** (pole500@supernet.com) and **Ruby Reyes** (rcreyest@pol.net) for the Silver Jubilarians, **Eli de Leon** (erdmd@msn.com) & **Roy Baldomero** (BaldoRoy@ol.com) for Pearl; **Roberto Castrence** (Castrence@aol.com) for Jade; and **El Castro** (elamor@optonline.net) for Ruby

We encourage everyone to make their class postings or announcements in the alumni website [uermalumni.org](http://uermalumni.org). See you in Manila. Mabuhay!

Monday, December 15 (Hospital Quadrangle)

5:30 PM Tour of the Center

6:00 PM Grand Alumni Welcome Party  
(Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, P. T.)

Tuesday, December 16

6:00 PM Carol fest

7:00 PM Class Night for UERMMMCA '78

Wednesday, December 17 (Auditorium)

9:00 AM - 12 Noon Convocation

12 Noon - 2:00 PM Lunch and Baccay Memorial Lecture

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Scientific Meeting, Business meeting (election of officers)

6:00 PM Lantern Parade (Quadrangle)

Thursday, December 18 (Shangri-La Isla 1 & 2, Mandaluyong City)

6:00 PM Medical Alumni Fellowship Night

Friday, December 19

Class 1978 get together

Jesus Tamesis, Jr., M.D.

Overall Chairman, 2003 Host Committee

For more information, please call the UERM Alumni Office Secretary Ida Tabuzo, at 011-632-716-0771 or [uermmaa@i-next.net](mailto:uermmaa@i-next.net).



## The Alumni Newsletter

UERMMMCA Medical Alumni Association of America, Inc.  
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*Happy Thanksgiving To All!*

