



# the Alumni Newsletter

Pre-Convention Issue

Marshfield, Wisconsin

June 2005

## Inside this issue

<i>Welcome/Schedule</i>	1
<i>Schedule</i>	2
<i>President/Director's Reports</i>	3/4
<i>Resident Advisory/Santa Mesa Happenings</i>	5/6
<i>Letters/Second Opinion</i>	7
<i>A Plea</i>	8

## Welcome to Houston.....

In behalf of the Houston organizing committees, Joe Tandoc and I would like to thank the members of the Executive Committee in the persons of Manny and Odette Blas, Irene Manlapaz, Susan and Rene Suntay and Sonia Rico-Todd, who came to Houston this weekend to provide leadership and support to the forthcoming Alumni Homecoming on August 4 thru 6, 2005. We had a spirited and productive general meeting on April 30, hosted again by Joe and Josie Tandoc. To date, class 65 is leading the anticipated attendance roll call with about 50 members. We enjoin all classes to start organizing their groups to grace this once a year celebration and fellowship. We are also called to get involved to make our Alma Mater achieve its lofty goals. We are all proud of this legacy. So come on one and all. Y'all come join the fun in Texas! A lot of entertainment awaits each of you. And by the way, Manny Blas, Ed Banez, Rene Suntay and Jun Nasser ('67) and I played at least 36 holes of golf. We closed the deal at Tour 18, where the golf tournament will be held.

Tom Lumicao Jr, '75

I would like to specially mention Ed Banez who provided not only his support and leadership but his stand up jokes to everyone's delight. Sorry Ed, my senior moments seem to be exacerbated by too much golf.

## Schedule of Activities..

### August 4, 2005 THURSDAY

6:30am- 4pm GOLF Tournament

12 noon - 4pm UERMMMCA-AFUSA Inc. Meeting

12 noon - 6pm Registration

6pm-12:00 am WELCOME and FELLOWSHIP NIGHT (Dinner/Dance & Fun)

ATTIRE Texas Casuals (Boots preferred, blue jeans optional!)

### August 5, 2005 FRIDAY

7am - 4 pm REGISTRATION

7am - 9 am Continental Breakfast

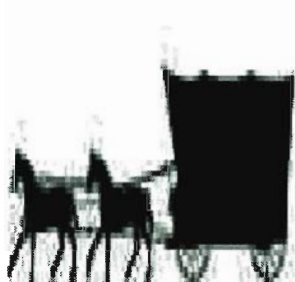
8am 4:45pm CME

6:30 - 12am JUBILARIANS NITE

(Dinner/Dance hosted by Class'65)

*(Continued on Page Two)*



*The Schedule (continued)*

August 6, 2005 SATURDAY

## GENERAL MEETING

7am- 9 am Continental Breakfast

8am – 10 am Gala Registration

8- 8:05 a.m. Welcome Address – Moderator,

Irene I. Manlapaz, M.D.

8:05- 8:20 am UERMMMC-MAAA, Inc. President's Report

Manny Blas, M.D.

8:20- 8:50 am Ratification of CBL Amendments Manny Blas, M.D.

8:50-9:40 am UERMMMC WISH LIST Auction

Irene Manlapaz, M.D.

9:40-10:00am BREAK

10:00-10:15am UERMMMC-AFUSA, Inc Chairman's Report

Bayani Elma, M.D.

10:15-10:45am Dean's Report

Georgina Paredes, M.D.

10:45-11:00am UERMMMC President's Report Romeo Divinagracia, M.D.

11:00- 12 noon Medical Education Symposium Sammy Piga, M.D.- Moderator

12 Noon- 1:00 pm Lunch (on your own)

1:00 pm- 6:30 pm FREE TIME

12:00am -2:00 pm UERMMMC-AAA, Inc. Executive Council Officers and

Members Meeting

6:30-12:00 am GALA DINNER/DANCE FORMAL ATTIRE BLACK TIE

## CME Program: "MEDICAL EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT UPDATE "

Saturday, August 6, 2005

7:00-8:00 am: Registration, Continental Breakfast and viewing of Exhibits

8:00-8:05 am: Welcome Address Tomas G. Lumicao, M.D. (Class '75)

Moderator and Chairman, Houston Convention Committee

8:05-8:50 am: "The Process of Planned Change in Undergraduate Medical Curriculum"

Florina Estrada, MD, PhD (Class '80)

8:50-9:30 am: "Help! I'm Drowning" (Navigating your way through the Ocean of

Information otherwise known as the Internet)

Senen Siasoco, M.D. (Class '75)

9:30-10:00 am: Coffee Break / Viewing of Exhibit

10:00-10:40 am: "Complementary and Alternative Medicine"

Grace Kuo, PharmD

10:40-11:30 am: "HIPAA in a Managed Care Environment"

David Paraiso, Jr.

11:30-11 45: Q&A

11:45-1 15 pm: Dr. Jose Cuyegkeng Memorial Luncheon Lecture

Keynote Speaker: Erlinda Valdellon, M.D. (Class '63)

1 15-1:30 pm: Q&A

1:30-2:10 pm: "Severe Headache: Diagnostic and Therapeutic Update"

Romer G. Geocadin, M.D. (Class '92)

2:10-3:10 pm: Breast CA Management Update

Abenaa Brewster, M.D.

MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX

3:10-3:30 pm: Coffee Break and Viewing of Exhibits

3:30-4:30 pm: "Excellence in End-of-Life Care"

Rev. Robert E. Lampert, Ph.D.,

Director of Ethics, Christus Health

4:30-4:45 pm: Q&A

4:45 pm: Adjourn



## *President's Report* Manuel P. Blas, MD

to the alumni which was submitted in the last issue, your patience is well appreciated. The report ended with a promise of reforms especially changes in the Constitution and By-Laws that will preclude a repeat performance of the last election. The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association will meet in Houston, May 30<sup>th</sup>, to act on some of these changes in order to be ready for ratification by the general membership during the next convention. This will enable us to incorporate these much needed changes into the CBL and be ready for the next General Elections, which will happen during the 2006 Convention. I will call special attention to those alumni that voiced out their concerns and opinions during those times when we were discussing reforms and needed changes. This is our opportunity to carry out our plans to establish a system of orderly elections so please make it a point to attend the general membership meeting during the Saturday morning session of the convention weekend in Houston. There are always debates going on one of the websites of the Alumni Association and one of them pertains to the Drug Assistance Program (DAP) and the Indigent Funds. There are good reasons for these debates because there are great deal of unanswered ethical questions as to why the patients of the Charity Hospital need your assistance. There are also questions of management of those funds and how they should be distributed, how it could be safeguarded, and to what extent should we help the medical school. There are also some members, who would question the style of management of its leadership, and here's the kicker-the members must be involved in the decision making processes when it comes to managing its funds. I agree that the membership must be involved but it must be by way of selecting its leaders and for the leadership to surround itself with knowledgeable people who are capable of the day-to-day business of the association. Anything else would be chaotic. Most questions, re, the DAP funds have been answered though communications between the Executive Director of the association and the President of the foundation. I must admit that the question of ethics may not be an easy one to answer. As President of the Alumni Association, I inherited the program and felt compelled to continue it till it runs its own course to 2006. However, our work does not stop there. We must continually think of ways to help towards the betterment of the Alma Mater that we love so much otherwise we should not be doing what we're doing. I think some people will take exception to this love affair especially those that had borne grudges (*see Letters to Editor*). Unfortunately we cannot help them for they are the perpetual bearers of psychological and mental baggage. Equally unfortunate is the fact that they refuse to help us. When I visited the Medical School in January, I met with Dean Paredes and President Divinagracia. I had the distinct pleasure of awarding a couple of complete four-year and another two half tuition scholarships to four truly deserving students. This is the most significant scholarship program opened at any time and this is a project of the Chicago and Midwest Chapter. In addition, some members of the same chapter are talking of establishing their own scholarships under their own names or their respective families. These are challenges I want to put forth to our Chapters and their members. If the medical school can attract the brilliant students with scholarships instead of going to the smaller schools with promise of rosy deals, it can have better chances of survival. Now, think about this because it is one of the most powerful and effective ways of acquiring a good student population. These students will be the nucleus that will carry the other parts of the student population. So think scholarships and do it, not talk about it. I mentioned earlier about being surrounded by capable people. I am indebted to the untiring Executive Vice President, Dr. Susan P. Suntay for her endless efforts in securing our contracts toward future conventions. Her chairmanship of the convention commission is the most difficult as far as I can see because it requires a deep knowledge and skill in negotiations. If you paid \$159 per night in Chicago in August last year, you have to thank her. I am also equally indebted to our Executive Director, Dr. Irene Manlapaz who has taken care of our day-to-day business while completing her MBA from UMASS. I can honestly say my Executive Director has an MBA, aside from her MD, with room to spare for a JD. Congratulations to Irene for a tremendous accomplishment. I will never forgive myself if I fail to thank our most able and hardworking treasurer, Dr. Sonia R. Todd who is putting together a database for our future conventions and its attendees. It is going to need constant tinkering on a year to year basis. To Dr. Ong Dekiam our secretary, his commitment to the medical school is without a doubt as complete as it can ever be. He is presently in the Philippines, overseeing how the materials and equipments sent to the school are being utilized, and he is also the bearer of Foundation funds. As we come together this coming August to celebrate our next Reunion and Convention, I may not have the chance to thank all these people personally. I am taking this opportunity to do it now and in behalf of the whole membership, thank you. We have another year to complete our mission till the next administration takes over in 2006. I have great expectations that the President-Elect, Dr. Edgar Banez's administration will be exciting and devoid of any baptism of fire.

I am proud to report that the newborn Michigan Chapter may have a new sister with Northern Ohio joining them shortly. The Chapter under the leadership of Dr. Eli DeLeon of Class 73 is planning their first inauguration this coming Memorial Day weekend

I would end my report with an appeal to our membership to continue to support our organization and its affiliate, the alliance and friends. The convention of 2004 held in Chicago is by far one of the most exciting and productive ones ever held. From the convention and from the previous one held in New York 2003, the Association was able to replenish the once depleted treasury from which to draw funds for its projects. The Alliance and Friends, thanks to the generosity of many people was able to raise a record of over \$9000 to benefit their projects amongst which is the Foundation. The Alliance and Friends established a precedent last year. They promise to keep up the pressure, so be ready for them.

As I mentioned earlier, our work has only just begun-we need your help. In Houston come August, do not be surprised if we exceed all previous conventions because this time we are led by Texans. I'm sure you've heard the expression "everything is big in Texas" Your presence will be a big boost for the organization and of course your generosity will always be appreciated. Thank you, hasta la vista. See you in Houston in August.

## Executive Director's Corner Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz,MD



“UERM- We Care” This is the theme of the Houston Convention & Reunion and it reflects the enthusiasm and dedication of the so many alumni who in the last several years have been trying hard to raise funds for the many projects that support our alma mater including the DAP/Indigent Fund, academic scholarships, medical/surgical missions, etc. With regards to the humanitarian mission, our Alumni Association together with the Northeast Chapter under the leadership of its president, Dr. Fely Quines has performed its first medical/surgical mission at UERM Hospital. Dr. Alex Bobila, the immediate past president of the Northeast chapter showed our young surgical residents the finer points of laparoscopic surgeries while Dr. Debbie A. Bobila shared with the anesthesia residents her expertise in putting the patients to sleep. Of course, the success of the mission is facilitated by the expert coordination of Dr. Andy Borrromeo, Head of the Department of Surgery and guidance of Dr. Romeo Divinagracia, President of UERMMMC. The 2<sup>nd</sup> UERM Medical/Surgical Mission is scheduled for February 14-16, 2006 in conjunction with the 1<sup>st</sup> Postgraduate Course to be held on Friday, February 17, 2006. A full-day CME is planned and in the evening will be the Fellowship Gala Dinner/Dance. The 2006 graduating class will be the main honorees at this Gala Night together with the rest of the jubilarians (class 1965, class 1970, class 1975, and class 1980). We invite our alumni to participate in this Medical/Surgical Mission, give lectures and/or grand rounds to our medical students & residents or be one of our CME lecturers. For more information please contact the U.S. coordinator, Dr. Irene I. Manlapaz (E-mail: [imanlapaz@hotmail.com](mailto:imanlapaz@hotmail.com)) and the Philippine coordinators, Dr. Tony ‘Bimbo’ Sibulo ([a\\_sibulo@yahoo.com](mailto:a_sibulo@yahoo.com)) and Dr. Andy Borrromeo ([aborromeomd@yahoo.com](mailto:aborromeomd@yahoo.com)). For any organization to survive the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it has to be efficient in its management and focused to its mission/s. The Alumni Association is ready to face the challenges of the new millennium. At its last Pre-convention Executive Committee Meeting held in Houston, Texas on April 30, 2005, the Committee approved important amendments to our Constitution and By-laws. The first of these amendments is about how to hold efficient and honest election. The other critical and important amendment is the change of our IRS tax-exempt status from 501 C (6) to 501 C (3). The Alumni Association, in order to be effective in helping our indigent patients and deserving indigent potential medical students, has to change its tax-exempt status. So we can easily avail of the so many grants available to 501 C (3) organizations that perform charitable projects like medical/surgical missions both domestically and internationally, support academic scholarships, etc. this important IRS status change has to be implemented. With the IRS 501 C (3) tax-exempt status, the Alumni Association will also be able to benefit from not paying any state tax in all the events/functions during our Annual Convention & Reunion. This added revenue will be used for the different projects of the Alumni Association. Houston, Texas will be set in our Association’s history as the place where the “Golden period” started. We need you all to attend the General Meeting on August 6, 2005 starting at 8:00 A.M. and participate at the ratification of these important amendments to our Constitution and By-laws. Soon after the general meeting at 11:00 A.M. there will be a one-hour Medical Education Symposium. The panelists will include Dean Georgina Paredes, President Romeo Divinagracia, Dr. Erlinda Valdellon, Dr. Andy Borrromeo, Dr. Benjie Rigor and Dr. Romer Geocadin. This symposium will be very informative with regards to the Medical School application process, scholarships, housing around the medical school, and different challenges on how get into post-graduate

### BANK ACCOUNTS *Sonia Rico-Todd,MD, Treasurer* as of April 15, 2005

A. CHECKING			
1. Bank One Balance, 08-01-04		\$27,143.74	
Credits		\$21,412.97	
Debits		-48,556.71	
Balance, 03-14-05	(Closed Account)		-0-
2. Lakeside Checking(Lockbox)	Opened 08-01-04		
Initial Deposit		\$25,000.00	
Credits		119,446.65	
Interest Earned		80.74	
Debits		-107,594.31	
Balance, 04-15-05			\$36,933.09
3. Convention Checking @ Lakeside(Lockbox)			
Initial Deposit, 03-08-05		\$2,500.00	
Interest Earned		0.14	
Balance, 04-15-05			\$2,500.14
B. SAVINGS			
Balance, 08-01-04		\$34,818.57	
Credits		19,450.00	
Interest Earned		421.99	
Balance, 04-15-05			\$54,719.17
C. CDs			
Balance, 08-01-04		\$5,384.51	
Interest Earned		94.58	
Balance, 08-01-04			\$5,479.09
TOTAL BANK BALANCE			\$99,631.49



## *Advice to the New Grad seeking a US Residency*

July, 2004

Dear Doctor,

Your inquiry on how to look for internship/residency/fellowship in the USA was forwarded to me by Dr. Conrado Miranda, Chairman, Board of Trustees, UERMMMC Alumni Foundation in America for a reply. I don't know you or your background, class standing and experiences but let me give you some pointers acquired through my three decades as Department Chairman and Program Director in 3 medical schools in this country. I am presently Emeritus Professor and Chairman and I am not Program Director anymore although some old brochures still mention me as Program Director. Let me start from the basic to the most detailed. Please have patience and be receptive to the following practical advice:

1. Prepare very good Curriculum Vitae. It must include the highlights of your undergraduate and medical education. List all honors, awards, publications, research projects, etc. Please remember you are trying to sell yourself! Don't make it too lengthy with unimportant details. Go direct to the point but with "bullets" and one liners, if possible.
2. I don't know what discipline you are interested in but don't apply to crowded disciplines or disciplines that AMGs (American Medical Graduates or domestic medical school graduates) want to pursue, i.e., ophthalmology, ER medicine, OB-GYN, the surgical subspecialties (orthopedics, urology, plastic surgery, thoracic cardiac surgery, etc.) but look for the less attractive disciplines, i.e., pathology, psychiatry, anesthesiology, family medicine, etc.
3. Consult the Green Book or the AMA Graduate Medical Education Directory in your medical library. They might have old issues but the Residency Programs are still there with the names of the Program Directors, their NIRMP Number, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. Many programs prefer electronic applications because it is faster and it saves a lot of time. WARNING!! Don't clutter their fax machine with lengthy letters and curriculum vitae!!
  - a) Start with the non-university programs first. Why? Because university programs will offer their best positions to their own graduates first-this makes sense because they know who they are and they already know the quality of the applicant.
  - b) Here is the pecking order (in the order of preference)
 

Graduates of their medical school, then graduates of other American medical schools, then applicants/graduates of US and Canada medical schools who've decide to shift disciplines, then graduates of US osteopathic medical schools, then US citizens who graduated from Caribbean/foreign medical schools that have US undergraduate degrees, then Caucasian graduates of English speaking countries, then IMGs from foreign medical schools. Note that you are at the end of the "chow" line and the last preference.
  - c) Most Program Directors will give IMG's a cut-off USMLE Step I & II scores of not less than 80%. If you have 75%, chances are that they might not even review your credentials! Every Program Director wants the best applicant for his/her program.
  - d) If your scores are below 80% in spite of your class standing and grades in medical school, apply first to non-university programs, then apply to university programs, if you still have the energy and enthusiasm and money to spend!
  - e) If you are a US citizen and can live in the USA, volunteer to observe or work in research in the Department where you want to pursue your training. Why? They will get to know you and vice-versa. If they offer you a grant not matter how miniscule it is, take it! As an observer, you can only observe, will not be able to touch patients or do patient work-ups because to State Licensure regulations and also the medico-legal implications.
  - f) If your USMLE scores are low, take another test but prepare better and give only the better scores rather than the old low scores. They might ask you how many times you took the USMLE tests!
4. Try to be very patient. Send as many applications as necessary. I know a Filipino M.D. who wrote 300 applications who did not even get a single interview!! Keep on trying and no matter what you do, it can be very expensive.
5. Take anything that they will offer you because you can still back out of a contract as long as you have a legitimate reason and also if you back out early enough so that they can still consider other desirable candidates. If you back out, do it with dignity and honor and as decently as possible.
6. When you are asked to report for an interview:
  - a) Dress properly usually a business suit which is dark in color. No loud ties, earrings, weird looking gadgets hanging on you. Be very professional!! Also be appropriate all the time.
  - b) Report on time and if you have to arrive the day before, practice going to the place of interview.
  - c) Remember you are being interviewed by busy professionals/practitioners and you don't want to waste their precious time!!
  - d) Answer questions directly and be honest if you don't know the answer rather than "bullshit" your interview. Remember, the interviewer is a specialist and he/she's the expert on the subject so that you will always be at a disadvantage.
- 7 After the interview, send the Program Director and those who interviewed you a "thank you" card letting them know you will rank them very highly. They will appreciate this gesture. Be humble and don't try to oversell yourself. They will know how good you are.
8. When asking for letters of references, be sure you will ask those who will give you a positive image!! If you have a reference in the US, use as much as possible because it is easier to communicate with him/her. If his/her e-mail address is available, please provide it to the Program Director. I found out that electronic mail/communication is faster and also less formal but very, very effective.

I wish you my best regards.

Benjamin M. Rigor, M.D., LL.D., UERMMMC '62  
 Emeritus Professor and Chairman  
 Dept. of Anesthesiology  
 School of Medicine  
 University of Louisville Health Sciences Center

## *You Know You're from UERM if... Janice M. Abadilla, MD'05*

Check out if you are a genuine, true-blue, bona fide graduate of the best medical school along Aurora Boulevard.

Appreciates antique instruments. We have microscopes that would've made it to Loewenhoek museum and lethal Amphitheater chairs on auto-retract. But as UERM students, we know how to handle them with grace and ease. Remember the days when you used to sit in the Anatomy Amphitheater during lectures as the dark room carefully seduce you to sleep? And how suddenly a loud banging noise wakes you up because someone else's book fell from such beautifully designed ergonomic tables? Lectures in the the Little Amphitheater is another story, with its hobbit-sized armchairs that vibrate while someone else's foot taps carelessly on the floor.

Terror Elevator. At the JMC Building (the old Research Building), you will find the state of the art and latest in technology (during the era of Dr. JMC) – the JMC elevator – ghost ride. It comes with a very pretty and kind Ate Mercy, who gracefully assists you when you come to school disoriented with your class schedule. Unfortunately, Ate Mercy takes a break every lunch time and after 5 PM, so some poor souls experience a ride of their lifetime – the eerie sounds matched with vibrating motion from the elevator floor, the creaking door that unexpectedly closes just when you're halfway inside it, or that doesn't completely close so you could take a peek at the intricacies of the building while it's elevating.

Manong's Balls. Here at UERM, you can still find the best choices to satisfy your stomach and your pocket at the same time. To those who seek lutong bahay recepies, we have Ilocana's, which for years has served hungry souls from the college and the hospital. We have the best street food nearby – hamburgers and sandwiches from the mini rolling store, green mangoes with sweet bagoong, sweet corn still hot from the steamer, and of course the classic fish balls and squid balls matched with spicy sauce.

Independent SM Period. What better way to relax after a grueling Monday exam than to hang out in a mall with your best buds, and a few bucks to see the latest movie in town. If UP-PGH and UST has Robinson's Place, and Letran, Mapua and PLM have SM Manila, UERM has its very own SM-Manila! This 20-year structure has been a haven for students longing to have a "life" aside from being a medical student. Well sometimes we have to exercise our muscles that has long been atrophied due to prolonged sitting while studying our lessons. Also our brains need to be stimulated a little differently from the usual pages of Harrison and Robbins. Colorful clothes and shoes, computer graphics, and movies usually do the trick!

Lansang Notes and the watchamacallit nerve tracks. What could've been more appropriately called "The complete Idiot's guide to Neuroanatomy," has definitely saved countless poor souls in UE purgatory. Prepared by THE Dr. Lansang, these supplementary notes truly ease one's way in the study of this deadly subject. In the College of Medicine, nobody is spared from the iron hands of the Harvard-trained consultants from the Neurology department. After painstakingly memorizing the different nerve tracks and pathways until they hunt you in your dreams, these neurologists bombard you with questions like "Where is the lesion?" and "Trace the pathway" A UERM student is known for his expertise in locating the lesion in the brain just by eliciting a thorough history and neurologic exam without the aid of expensive and sophisticated diagnostic tests, a skill that's beyond compare to any medical student in the land.

Stop, Look, and Listen. nah! Yes, you learned three cardinal rules in crossing the street since Kindergarten. But on our very own Aurora Boulevard, UERM students develop the uncanny ability of crossing the street, even when blindfolded, without being run over by the rampaging vehicles. Of course this takes a lot of practice and courage. But never fear! What do you think the compulsory Red Cross training is for? ("Hey, hey, are you ok? Survey the scene! Airway, breathing and circulation!") No other medical school provides a special "crossing the street" course!

The "Sandwich Wars" For more than 15 years, the silent war has continued even up to this day. More bitter than the rivalries in history: boxing's Tyson vs. Holyfield, NBA's Lakers vs. Pistons, PBA's Crispa vs. Toyota, or UAAP's La Salle vs. Ateneo, even way bitter than the rivalry of Jollibee and McDonald's, nothing can compare to UERM's Sandwich Wars! On the "right corner", Ate X offers free delivery service anytime, anywhere, anyplace, within our halls. On the "left corner", Ate Y provides total comfort with a seating capacity of 7 to 9 persons in an air-conditioned room. So take a pick! Both are satisfying, or is one better than the other?

Establish rapport UERM is proud to produce doctors, nurses, and physical therapists who are filled with compassion and dedication to their work and to their patients. From PD I to PD III, we are trained to interview a patient not only based on his illness but on his whole being. It has become a golden rule to flash your sincerest smile, rub elbows with the elbows, or share a laugh or two with the patients, and see how your interview elicited more than what you actually need. This trait has been deeply imbibed to us that outside UERM, this has become our trademark – healers with a heart and listeners of the grieving soul. So don't stop at being labeled as a graduate of the best school in Aurora Boulevard, but the best among the country's medical schools.



## *Second Opinion* Senen V. Siasoco, MD '75

A high school buddy of mine passed away a couple of weeks ago. It was totally unexpected, he was ostensibly in the prime of health, exercised regularly, ate properly, had just retired from a prestigious post as dean of our old college. He had complained of some chest discomfort, enough to make him consult his cardiologist at the Philippine Heart Center. He was admitted to the ICU where he spent the next two days. I do not know what tests were performed, or medications prescribed. He was discharged with a diagnosis of "peptic ulcer disease." At home, his symptoms abruptly worsened, culminating in what appeared to be a massive coronary event.

Honrado's demise ignited a profound discussion on our egroup, re, the Medical Care system that we all experienced in our earlier lives. Because we have access to the "best" medical advice here in the land of milk and honey, my US-based amigos were screaming bloody hell! Malpractice! Lynch the M-Fers! The homeboys were more pragmatic. Honny is gone, he had a good life, let's all move on.

My position is an amalgam of the contrasting opinions. I cannot condemn my East Avenue colleagues, I am sure they practice to the utmost of their abilities, utilizing the optimum technology available. If Honny had \$30,000 (a whopping 1.5 Million pesos)- he might have had his LAD/LCx/RCA's bypassed, and still be designing buildings today. Here in the States, he would have undergone procedure after test after exam with no regard whatsoever as to the expenses involved. If he survived the initial episode, he would have been Schiavoed- kept breathing, alimented, undecubitized- for decades. That is not a "life" for me.

So, Menchu, BJ- are you listening? Consider this my Living Will. All of you reading this, get cracking on yours too. Otherwise the politicians will decide for you. If and when I get really, really sick (hopefully not in the next 30 years), pass on the histrionics and let me go as swiftly, comfortably (i.e., pain-free), and as frugally as possible. Blame no one but the disease. Donate whatever organs can be salvaged (56 years can cause some mighty wear and tear). Remember me fondly, as I remember Honny.

Some notes regarding this issue-

Dr Rigor's letter to a young grad has been circulating on the Alum network, and I felt this periodical was the proper medium for it. Best wishes to Janice Abadilla (UERM Sta Mesa, Class '05) as she embarks on her professional career- keep up the good (writing) work! I tried contacting Silver Jubilarians (Class 80 where are you? Hello, Jo A.) but no articles made it in time for publication- better luck post-Houston, I hope. The Election Saga continues, Dr. Blas tackles the issue in his Report find out what others think on the Alum website: [www.uerm.org](http://www.uerm.org). Registration forms, Meeting brochures, et al, are also available to download. Class 72 has been enthusiastically looking forward to the Reunion- alas, their story still has to cross my desk as I bring this issue to press (as has Jon Piga's Odyssey). I found Dr. Butaney's letter quite interesting, albeit a bit gloomy (I believe Time heals all wounds) so I thought Vic Oyek's missive could provide some (positive) balance. More fascinating Texan Enticements can be perused on the net, not enough space in these here pages. The Annual Alma Mater Wish List was, likewise, text heavy- you shall hear more about it in Houston-bring your checkbook! I was also trying to print the list of Lifetime members but I couldn't figure out how to make the frames/columns tool work on the Publishing software I use, I'll get to it next. Meanwhile, Mabuhay! and keep those cards and letters coming.

## LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I have two things for you...

1. Election Controversy: If all of you would just grow up and act your age, then everybody will be better off. It would be nice if you like somebody and are capable of working with him/her. But do not lose sight of the goal which is for the betterment of the group, the UERM Alumni. So if you don't like the personality of the person you are involved with, be creative and work constructively. I am sure you are all creative, intelligent people capable of putting the school first, this is all that really matters.

2. The Reason I am not attending the alumni festivities is because of the hurt inflicted on me as a student by the instructors, staff, and faculty, etc. Okay...who was not mistreated during our school days?!? You may have been able to escape the torment of one instructor, but another will catch up with you somewhere. Looking back, you probably needed to be corrected anyway. We cannot all be 'bida.' The supporting crew and background workers are the makers and breakers of a job, NOT the 'bida' or CEO in an endeavor.

**Edna Butaney, MD '65**

Boston, MA

Hello,

Just returned from Manila, visited UERM several times and also attended Homecoming events. I have a very favorable impression of our Main Library. It remains a nice, quiet place for study; the staff was very helpful and courteous. The journal selections are more varied and relatively up to date. They now have an online subscription to MD Consult with about 40 medical references available for access. I sat down with Rory Tambago (Asst. Librarian) a few times. Raissa Ocaya (Chief Librarian) was out on meetings, but I did talk to her on the phone. I sent you by US Postal Service some documents from Raissa, i.e. request for funding, copies of receipts, and lists of materials sent to the library by our alumni including the ones I brought this time. I also enclosed a copy of the latest Mediscope. Raissa has an article on that one.

Happy Holidays to everyone.

**Victor Oyek, MD, '73**

Merrillville, IN

**A Plea (Ed.Note :following is an e-mail exchange from Dr. Romy Divinagracia , to Dr. Ben Rigor and Dr. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, recorded January 2005 and is self-explanatory)**

Dear Irene,

It looks like nobody among the alumni want to contribute or buy some cardiology equipment for our alma mater as per Dr. Divinagracia's request! Please keep me informed.

Ben

Dear Benjie,

We do not have a cath lab at the UERMMH as you know and that means we and are unlikely to be able to use these stents for our patients. However, occasionally we have patients that we refer to the Heart Center charity Ward for procedures and in these cases we may be able to use some but not so many) of these. Maybe some other hospitals like PGH maybe able to use them as they now have a cath lab. What we need are external pacemakers (for temporary pacing); Pacing catheters (transvenous); ECG machine, stress test (treadmill); 3D echo machine (with color Doppler), ambulatory blood pressure monitors (recorder and scanner), Holter machine (recorder and scanner), transport stretchers for the emergency room, bedside cardiac monitors for the emergency room. These are some of the urgent needs of the cardiovascular section. Any help will be appreciated.

Romy

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*Pahabol*: the following arrived at my desk after I had "put the issue to bed"(sent it to the press) but I found it so compelling I spent a weekend running it through the ol' deskjet- bring out your reading spectacles! It was written by Monina (Moonyeen) Posa-Kane and friends, and is entitled **"It takes a class to make a reunion, and the catalyst that made it possible"**

As with many things in life, we instinctively have a fairly good basic knowledge of what matters most, but, as we all know, we cannot possibly be constantly consciously aware of everything considered important at all times! Hence, until someone brings it to our attention or something raises our consciousness about a particular issue, we generally go through life somewhat rather oblivious or blasé about many matters or take for granted entities that should probably be fundamentally valuable to us. Such things include class reunions, reconnecting with our classmates, friends and our (academic) past and overlooking the very essential and salient fact that, "it takes (more than a few in) a class to make a (great) reunion"! I attended the UERM Alumni reunions regularly until I lost my husband ten years ago. I became so thoroughly consumed with "my life" thereafter that it took two former classmates to nudge me back to "the UERM reality" The experience was so gratifying, I feel compelled to share this personal odyssey which readily transformed my apathy to unbridled enthusiasm. I am convinced that as a class we collectively went through the same phenomenon approximately the same period though only halfway consciously aware as it was unfolding and without fully acknowledging the evolving process to each other. Our initially languorous individual reaction was in sharp contrast to the increasingly hypomanic tone of the group response which eventually culminated into an unrestrained crescendo of such overwhelmingly pervasive spirit of optimism and enthusiasm. We recently loosely began referring to it as "karma" at Lamberto "Benching" Tan's suggestion, as he believes that everything happens for a reason (rather than by coincidence). Almost instantaneously, the importance of attending the reunion has somehow become so compelling, there now seem to be a great sense of urgency to "stand up and get counted"! In my case, it all started so innocently like this: It was a dark and stormy day in mid-January, when the doorbell rang whereupon opening the front door, there stood the postman with a package and the day's mail. Following the cursory exchange of pleasantries and the obligatory small talk about the weather, I proceeded to sign on the dotted line, and thanked him profusely. As I closed the door and sat down at my desk, I couldn't help but ruminate over the mantra of the Postal Service "neither sleet, nor rain, nor ice or snow." It surely made me wonder in awe of their dedication, determination and commitment to get their rather monotonous ("to an ADHD like me"! [according to my Peds specialist friend and classmate Manny "Vivs" Vivero!]) job done, day-in and day-out! I mindlessly flipped through the pile of mail until I came across one from a dear classmate, the always presidential and ever fearless head of the class, Charlie "Chuck" Gotardo, who I have not seen for at least ten years since the last UERM reunion I attended. He wrote about the upcoming reunion in Houston and the class pledge to raise funds to support the dean's scholarship project. Reading through his letter, I can't help but think back to the postman and the Postal Service mantra, as I have always been very much aware that there isn't anyone else in our class who has been most consistently involved and somehow always managed to effortlessly lead and fill the role he was born and destined to do, that of the fearless leader of "The Wild Bunch" (UERM Class '72). Though I was not in the least enthused about attending another reunion I knew too well that I owe him for all the time he has invested and the effort he had put forth over the years to keep us all together with some semblance of cohesiveness much like that of the maestro conducting an orchestra. I was also mindful that all the work he has done, he did purely out of the goodness of his heart and an innate sense of duty to us as a leader and for an even more noble purpose of giving back to his alma mater! An overwhelming sense of gratitude intensified my already gnawing feeling of guilt that I knew, there and then, that at the very least, I should respond to his letter and make good on the pledge..

*Hi Chuck, It's good to hear from you and to know that there are people such as yourself who consistently put forth the effort to keep everybody informed and maintain the lines of communication open not only for us to remain in touch, but, also to keep the alumni spirit alive! I admire your steadfast resolve! On the other hand, there are people like myself who became totally "out of touch" and dropped out of circulation for one reason or another. In my case, and as you may well know, for eight years following my husband's death, I lost interest in many things and even attempted to retire from my practice in May 2000. It lasted two and a half years. This past two years, I've been back in practice but limited only to out-patients twenty hours per week, which seems to suit me just fine. This gives me time to do volunteer work and travel. I am scheduled to go several places this year; however, I am going to try my best to attend our alumni meeting in Houston. I'm sorry I cannot help you with the e-mail listing; however, if I come across any, I will be sure to forward them to you. I also plan to contribute to our class project. I just need to clear my "to do" list for this month. The Holidays had been hectic and I am in the middle of my preparation for a three week trip to the Philippines and Singapore. I will be in touch, and please do the same. Take care and keep up the good work!!! All the best, Moonyeen*

Enter Benching Tan...Per his account, Benching, like most of us in mid-January, was busy with his life and his avocation of "music arrangement and production" He has been involved with making "music diary" gifts for family and friends for all occasions, a hobby he has thoroughly enjoyed for many years. For his amusement, and as a form of diversion, he made CD's with a collection of favorite songs tailored to the occasion that is being celebrated by or for the person(s) he is gifting the CD. The following is an excerpt of his e-mail to us when he first embarked on his initial attempt at compiling a class directory with the original intention of sharing his love of music with all of us through a music diary. Little did we know at that time that he and his music were going to be the catalysts that would awaken the hibernating alumni spirit in most of us and pave the way for the Hajj to Houston this August: *Class '72 A very very Happy Greetings and a BIG HELLO to all my wonderful classmates 1967-1972 UERMMM almost every year now...I've been sending my family/close friends a Christmas CD that i arranged accompanied by a write-up it has been one of my most enjoyable hobbies then...I thought of doing a special Class '72 music CD of songs that are memorable to us that would immediately bring us back to when we were medical students, like You've Got A Friend, Little Green Apples. I had seen Chuck Gotardo's name in the Alumni newsletter, he must have your addresses, Lo and Behold!!! talking about vibes he just E-mailed me about our pledge to our dear Alma Mater .Anyway this is my plan or should i say our plan: 1) let us all send in our pledge, 2) send me 2-3 memorable songs during our time as medical students, 3) songs can also be in Filipino like "ang boyfriend kong Baduy" ,4) accompany it with a short story why it is memorable, it can be something funny or a love story(a theme song maybe?)or just tell it the way it is or if it is too personal rest assured it will remain anonymous,5) I'm hoping i can make about 2 music CDs of our time and a nice write-up of wonderful memories which we all can share,6) send me your complete addresses & telephone # & E-mails( to give you an idea, I will be sending you my music CD arrangement of the 60's and an excerpts of my introduction to the Seventies it is best appreciated if you listen to the cd first), 7) if you have our other classmates addresses, be it here or Philippines or abroad kindly send them to me, I'll be contacting them( I might as well make a complete directory or someone out there may have it already? help!, 8) with your anticipated participation we can make this happen and a reality...it will be great!!! ..thnx a lot!!! Love ,benching* First, there was a trickle of e-mail, and then came the deluge of more e-mail from Benching, "the catalyst" himself. I was hooked! He got me. and there was no going back! This was the point of no return for me...I saw the sign and it said: "Moonyeen, you're not in Oklahoma anymore"!

*Hi Benching, How are you? From reading your very upbeat and enthusiastic e-mails I am sure, absolutely great!!! I am encouraged and inspired by your optimism! If there is anything at all that our alumni class needs to get us all fired-up, not only for our upcoming reunion, but to continually foster the friendship and camaraderie and obviously, also the UE alumni spirit in all of us, is a great cheerleader such as yourself! Thank God for people like you and Chuck Gotardo who not only unselfishly devote and donate your time, but also share your talent, your hopefulness and cheerfulness to rally the "troops" and keep the Class '72 spirit alive!!! Kudos to both of you for your zealous desire to rekindle in all of us the same eagerness and optimism that both of you undoubtedly have faithfully over the years unwaveringly and tirelessly nurtured. As for myself, I am definitely getting there; hearing from you and Chuck and getting updated on the response from our classmates have certainly moved my own enthusiasm several notches up!!! In reference to the songs that tend to somehow bring very pleasant memories of the (mostly) wonderful times I had in medical school, Macarthur's Park and the one which starts with "faded photographs with lines and creases"...etc. are definitely the two that will do it for me every time! These were two of the songs that we sang together (our*

module/group) when we were on-call during our rotation in Psychiatry. As you know, the calls were generally slow and uneventful, hence, Dante Oreta would bring his guitar and we would sing-along! At times, when we get delusionally overly emboldened/overconfident, we would go off campus and go clubbing (imagine that)!! We got caught one time and we all had to be on "special duty" (indefinitely, it seems), and consequently, we spent more and more time singing together. It was good practice for all of us, and no wonder that to this day, I still love to sing! There was another time (and song) that stood out prominently in my memory whenever I think of medical school. I'm sure you and many others still remember the time when Raul Rodelas and Filmore Riego sang "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head" in front of the class. I am not quite sure what exactly motivated that whole scenario, although, I believe, whoever it was that was supposed to show-up to either give a lecture or an exam was running late, and I guess they twisted their own arms to give us their rendition of that song!!! If nothing else, I believe, it awakened us from our boredom and/or chronic sleep-deprivation stupor! So, there you go...three songs out of the many thousands that, for me, automatically evoke some very wonderful memories of those times and which thirty-odd years later could still bring a smile and great fondness for all the friends and the memories that I will forever cherish. Again, thank you so much for all the time and effort you put forth for this project. You are an inspiration, and my hats off to you!! My best regards to you and your family. Take care, and please stay in touch. All the best, He sent me one CD and then two more! I listened and could not stop! He definitely and without a doubt, got me sold right here...the next thing I knew, he was reeling me in and shipping me... where??? "HOUSTON"!!! "Yes ma'am, get on board and we'll get your butt down to Houston" says Captain Vivs Vivero. "Please don't call me ma'am" I protested. "Okay Missy, what have you got here?", Lieutenant Armand Wiltz asked. "Laptop, Ipod and three CD's from a friend...absolute essentials"! I said. "Benching sent us those CD's and Lani waxes sentimental over it" Armand continued. "What's the hold-up, man? Send her to first class and serve her Dom Perignon"! Commander General Poksy Seldera pipes in. "Isn't that reserved for..."? I started to ask. "You're cool" he says. Coily, I muttered, "Oh, but, you shouldn't have"... Hi Benching, what can I say? Thank you for the music (ABBA)! You have outdone yourself again, my friend! Try as we all might, you will definitely be a tough act to follow! We may as well give you your award now, as you have unequivocally won and have totally "smoked" the competition! Your award? The "Nobel Prize" for the most novel, innovative, and creative networking and motivational tool, to inspire a diverse group of physicians "separated at graduation" and now spread-out worldwide, to "reach-out and touch (maybe not) someone..." through the power of music and the WWW, such feat could not have been possible, but for your own compelling commitment, patience, hard work, a single-minded determination to make this project a success (!) and a very understanding spouse/children, not to mention all the effort, time, expense, sacrifice, and long-distance bills, etc! I must say, you have, without a doubt, achieved your ultimate goal of getting everyone interested and focused on the reunion in Houston, come August! You got me, no doubt! Well done! Not only did you get it done, it was a job (and still ongoing) extremely well done! My hat's off to you! You're quite amazing! So, how do you do it and where do you get your time? I am curious (yellow) as a cat! Oh, I know...you have a crew of illegal aliens down your basement...oh, wait...no...up your attic! You invented a time machine! Hmmm...maybe .psychostimulants/speed? You bribed your kids! You own BMG records and somebody's fronting your recording company because you fear getting kidnapped for ransom! I give up, tho' I must tell you, I'm green with envy, yet, I'm very much in AWE! All kidding aside, I have enjoyed listening to the songs and it is definitely an invaluable, easily accessible, relaxing and inspirational tool. Your choices are terrific and very relevant to our class '72 culture and mindset, and, quite obviously, to the very independent/liberated females amongst us who can, most definitely, relate to song #3, (Waray, Waray), but, for one little detail...lest we forget, not only do Filipino women or the "women of waray-waray" have muscles like steel, but, we have balls of steel to match, no sh...! Great songs! It certainly makes one pause and wistfully think and smile and laugh and fondly reminisce and cry and look back and after all's said and done, feel eternally grateful for the many wonderful memories that we will forever cherish and, most of all, be able to share with one another at the reunion! So, see you in Houston! Deal? Well, my friend, great accomplishment! You are absolutely rockin' man! You have produced not only a collectible, but, a great work of art, indeed! All the best, Moonyeen

THE KARMA. It is happening and it looks like we're really going to have a wonderful reunion! When you think about it, it is actually quite rather simple...two former classmates brought together by fate worked tirelessly with the original intention of funding the dean's scholarship project, one's great love and appreciation of music which he passionately generously wish to share "strikes a chord" in his former classmates, this group so deeply touched by the altruism of its leaders and the memories brought about by the music of their time rediscovered one another, and, with the help of the internet, surprisingly yields the unintended consequence of hopefully, a very well-attended reunion! If that is not Karma...I wouldn't know what to call it...

Hi Benching, Talk about Karma.... Thank you for sharing your thoughts. As I perused your note and have a chance to cogitate over the pervasive spirit of friendship, camaraderie, and warmhearted fellowship amongst our classmates, I believe it was bound to happen...call it fate, destiny...not only for me, but, for all of us who are planning to attend the reunion. It was/is good KARMA...(the guys are squirming in their seats, and maybe some of the ladies too)! Like you, and I'm sure it was true for most of us at that time when Chuck sent us those letters about the reunion/pledge, I was just quietly living my (not so quiet and always crazy/busy!) life in my neck of the woods and minding my own business! I was furiously preoccupied with inconsequential sh\*t and was frantically getting ready for my February 12th UP medical mission/trip, and so, the reunion in Houston, which I may have read about in passing, in the UE alumni newsletter, which I would occasionally skim through several weeks or months after I've received them, was not even registering a "bleep" in my subconscious radar and was the farthest thing from my mind at that time. Nevertheless, I, most definitely, did not have any intention to ignore Chuck nor his letter, and the polite thing to do, obviously, was to respond and pay lip service about going, altho' I did not have an iota of interest in attending another reunion! I have attended five, before Michael died, and there were always only very few of us who would attend, as you have seen in my UERM reunion photo album I sent you, therefore, not exactly very motivating. What influenced me primarily then, was Aloma (my perennial cattle-prod), and my APPA friends (we used to hold our medical school reunion and the APPA in the same locale as did the other medical schools). So, looking back, I am truly glad that you got involved, because, paying lip-service about attending the reunion, (to Chuck), and then sending my pledge following my return from the medical mission, that was the extent of involvement I had in mind at that time. I'm sorry to say, but, I did try to resist responding to your group e-mails as well for a while, until I could no longer hold myself back! It had nothing to do with you at all; I know me too well and I knew I just can never be halfway involved! Like most things in my life, it was all or nothing! Anyhow, your positive energy (chi), your good vibes and good karma, and, most of all, the basic goodness of your heart, were overpowering, it was impossible to disregard! I got hooked like the lassoed ostrich in the menu at "Leilani's Kitchen" and the rest is history! Never mind that I was overwhelmed with work, social and volunteer activities, and all the preparation for my trip home, at that time, there was no stopping me, I was thoroughly compelled to become involved! Now, analyze that! Karma, perhaps? As I've said before, the relentless e-mails from you and Chuck shamed me into getting off my rear-end and make sure that I get my butt down to Houston come August!!! I am most grateful to you and Chuck your resolve and dedication has so moved and inspired me, I am enthusiastically looking forward to seeing you and all our classmates! I am anxiously anticipating a wonderful chance to reconnect, and most of all, the great opportunity to get to know one another, altho' I believe I have come to know you better already through your music and your passionate commitment to your ongoing project, and with Chuck, through his innate ability for a strong and compassionate leadership and to calmly maintain order in the midst of chaos! Regretfully, the demands of medical school and having a family then never really allowed me many occasions to get to know most of you, except those in my module (the MNOP and Q's), hence, this is a welcome opportunity to do so. I feel a renewed sense of enthusiasm and optimism and your love of music and willingness to share it with all of us, has had a truly phenomenal effect on me, and I am sure everybody's eagerness to renew friendships, or, perhaps, forge new ones, share memories, hang-out and catch-up, and, at least, maybe for a brief period, allow ourselves to go back in time to "the way we were"! Thank you for the music and the inspiration, pal, and take it easy as you embark on yet another "music diary" project. Should I have a hankie ready? I shall see all of you in Houston! I am so looking forward to it! Walang Indian, right?...only cowboys...and cowgirls too, of course!!! Take care and stay in touch all the best, Moonyeen, HOUSTON, HERE WE COME!