



# The Alumni Newsletter

No. 3 Post-Convention Issue

Dallas, Texas

November 2000

## 12th Confab Honors Class 1975



*Members of the Silver Jubilarian Class of 1975 celebrate at the annual convention gala.*

**Las Vegas** - The UERMMMCA Medical Alumni Association in America, Inc. held its 12th national convention and reunion last August 2-5 at the Paris Hotel Resort and Casino in Las Vegas. The four day millennium meeting attended by about 400 alumni and their families consisted of a golf tournament, an eight-hour continuing medical education program, jubilarian class parties, gala dinner-dance, and business meetings.

The highlight of the affair was the traditional dinner on Friday, August 4th, honoring the 25th year jubilarian class of 1975, represented by 31 graduates, six of whom came all the way from the Philippines.

The silver jubilarians, introduced by Dr Ricardo Alfafara, '73,

a Las Vegas cardiologist, each received a medallion from alumni officers, joined in a solemn candle-lighting ceremony, presented two dance numbers, and then danced the night away along with the rest of the happy alumni present.

The honorees, led by Drs. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz and Senen Siasoco, held a class party the previous night.

Classes 1970 (pearl) and 1965 (jade) were also recognized and honored. Not to be outdone, surprise dance numbers were also given by these jubilarians.

In related activities, other attendees hosted their own individual class meetings and parties across this glittering city the night before.



*New officers sworn in - Dean Esperanza Lansang administers the oath of office to Drs. Querubin (president), Rastrollo (president-elect), Casibang (vice president), Ibanez-Manlapaz (secretary), and Magpantay (treasurer).*

## Querubin Sworn In As President

**Las Vegas**- Dr. Renato D. Querubin, class 1967 an otolaryngologist, head and neck, facial, plastic, and reconstructive surgeon from Amherst, Ohio, was sworn in as the 7th president of the Alumni Association at the annual convention's gala reception on August 4th at the Paris Hotel Resort and Casino.

Inducted to a two-year term with Querubin were Drs. Joseph Rastrollo, '73, president-elect, Isabelita B. Casibang, '71 vice-president, Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, '75, secretary, and Cristeta B. Magpantay, '69, treasurer, who also took their oath of office before Dr. Esperanza Lansang, Dean of the College of Medicine.

In his inaugural address, Querubin outlined his vision for the future as he pledged to make the alumni association stronger and faithful to its mission to assist the Alma Mater academically and financially.

In the first business meeting of the executive committee under his administration the next morning, Querubin got off to a fast start as he organized his working group headed by Dr. Rolando Mendoza, '67, who will serve the last year of his three-year term as executive-director.

He laid out his agenda as he called for changes in the constitution and by-laws, activation of an auxiliary group, and increased convention participation with the possible inclusion of the Colleges of Nursing and Physical Therapy alumni in North America.

The committee made up of the new officers, past presidents, and chapter presidents approved Cleveland, Ohio as the next annual convention site on August 2-4, 2001. It also agreed to a \$41,000 new fiscal year budget outline and recommitted the association to funding the scholarship and support projects of the UERMMMCA Alumni Foundation for the College of Medicine.

# Convention Activities

## CME Program Showcases Alumni

The two-day scientific meeting of the 12th alumni convention held on August 3-4 offered participants updates on a variety of topics presented by UERMMMC alumni and invited guests.

The program, moderated by outgoing president Dr. Benjamin Rigor, featured alumni Drs. Ana Maria Guanlao-Pasatiempo, '82 (Allergic Rhinitis and Hay Fever), Ludivino De Guzman, '69 (Anesthesiology in the Philippines), Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, '75 (Fine Needle Aspiration Biopsy), and Jose Prudencio, '78 (Urology).

Other speakers were Drs. Jacob Aranda (Drug Development Metabolism and Rational Clinical Therapeutics), William Evans (Cardiology), Mariano Castro-Magana (Gender Assignment and Sexual Ambiguity), Rene Magno-Nora (Compulsive Gambling), and C. Philip Larson (Present Status of Medical Education in the Philippines).

Larson, a member of the on-site visit team to the Philippines from the Division of Medical Licensure, State of California, reported on the nature and method of the survey done on Manila-area medical schools in early 1999 and concluded that "medical education in the Philippines" as represented by UP, UERMMMC, UST and FEU colleges of medicine "is equivalent to that of the State of California and most of the United States".

Larson cautioned, however, that such status does not change the application process that physicians from the Philippines must go through to be licensed in California.

## Cuyergkeng Memorial Lecture

### Narrajos Sees Challenges For UERMMMC-MAAA and Foundation Incs.

Dr. Benjamin V Narrajos, '63, a clinical professor of surgery at the University of Illinois, Chicago, reaffirmed the continuing relevance of the alumni association and the alumni foundation and offered suggestions to pursue it.

Delivering the Dr. Jose Cuyergkeng Memorial Lecture at the convention luncheon on August 3rd, Narrajos recognized the organizational difficulty of the association and proposed a permanent secretariat that will provide office and clerical support for officers and members.

He also called for modest but affordable and achievable programs to support the college of medicine through the foundation.

He identified public health and family medicine as areas of emphasis in alumni funding.

He urged alumni to volunteer as lecturers, mentors, and preceptors at the college of medicine throughout the year.

He concluded his talk with the admonition "to do the right thing, the right way, the first time, every time" for the organization.

## Reports Stress Gap in School Needs and Funding

Dean Esperanza Lansang delivered an upbeat report to the convention on August 3rd.

Leading off the afternoon session of the day's meeting, Lansang reported that the clinical skills lab materials donated by the alumni foundation last year are already in use by sophomores and juniors.

The faculty, particularly the basic sciences' continues to implement the innovative learning curriculum (problem-based learning) now in its 3rd year of implementation.

The college also has joined an accreditation process in the Philippines which will qualify it for student loan program participation by next year.

She appealed for alumni help in faculty development and curriculum enhancement to improve student learning and performance.

Dr. El Castro, chairman of the UERMMMC-MAAA Foundation, Inc., in his report preceding Dr Lansang's, enjoined his audience to "contribute their time, talent, and treasure" to the foundation's endeavor.

He listed past and present programs that have been supported by alumni through their tax-deductible donations.

However, he lamented the dearth in

*"Medical education in the Philippines... is equivalent to that of the State of California and most of the United States"*  
-Larson

alumni giving citing that only 2% of members donate to the foundation. He revealed that an allocation of \$25,000-\$35,000 a year is required by its ongoing projects for the medical school alone.

He sought to widen the donor base of the foundation as he called for a new and updated membership directory and a unified website.

Lansang and Castro's words resonated well with the attendees the next day as the foundation raised over \$5,000 in pledges during the auction for the Dean's wish list.

In another report, Dr. Felipe Sese, President of the Medical Center, announced the settlement of the labor dispute which nearly shut down the medical school in 1996.

He added that the center posted a modest net income for the last fiscal year, the 5th year in a row the center has shown a positive operating balance even as the hospital piles up losses.

Sese also bared plans for capital improvements and marketing to make the hospital more profitable and competitive in Metro Manila.

To cap the long day, Dr. Henry Yancz, '73, President of the UERMMMC-MAAA Philippines, reported on his side's efforts at organizing regional chapters in the islands providing low-cost loans to alumni dependents in medical school and coordinating medical missions with USA-based alumni groups.

## Dateline Manila

Class '98 Scores 77%- The UERMMMC medicine class of 1998 scored a 77% passing rate in the medical board exams given in Manila last August, placing 3rd overall behind 1st place UP (94%) and runner-up UST (90%). None of the 104 successful grads landed in the top 10. The national passing percentage for the year is 65.55%.

Dean Lansang attributed this to the higher comparative NMAT (National Medical Admission Tests) scores of students admitted to the latter schools. A plan is underway, she said, to increase the recruitment of better qualified students more so now as the college prepares for the fourth year of the PBL curriculum.

**Flood Damages Hospital Again-** Heavy torrential rains unleashed a rampaging Dario River on September 10-11 that breached the retaining wall behind the hospital, damaging the ground floors of the hospital and the Departments of Psychiatry and Neuroscience. A permanent transfer of these units to higher floors of the old administration building is underway. As of press time, another flooding ravaged the hospital again on November 9-10 to a lesser degree.

**End of Life Care Added to Curriculum-** In an effort to comply with a new California Medical Licensure Board requirement, the college of medicine introduced end-of-life care into the level 2 (sophomore) of the PBL curriculum during the recently concluded 1st semester.

**Class '73 Donates \$4,415-** The Philippine-based class '73 alumni donated P200,000 (\$4,415) to the college of medicine this summer. Dean Lansang said that the gift enabled the college to meet some projects sponsored by different departments.

## Dateline USA

**Research Award Initiated-** The student/ resident research program, recently announced by Dean Lansang, received its first vote of support from Dr Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, '75, who pledged \$200 per year for five years to the best research paper by a UERM student or resident.

**Busy Year For Northeast Chapter-** Dr Emilio P Quines, Jr., president, bared plans for a medical mission to Iloilo in February '01 followed by an induction ball in March when Dr. Roy Baldomero takes over as chapter head. Monthly CME meetings continue through the area Philippine Medical Association that Quines concurrently

leads. He also said that the chapter has been able to donate \$3,000 to the

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\* NEWS BRIEFS \* NEWS BRIEFS \*



# OFFICERS' CORNER



## Come to Cleveland!

It is with passionate interest that I start my tenure as president of the UERMMMC MAAA, Inc. I am aware that I have enormous shoes to fill considering the multiplicity and varied achievements of my predecessors. The past leaderships have achieved so much particularly in giving assistance to our Alma Mater both financially and academically. I promise to continue

\* this remarkable momentum with exciting visions for the future. We will continue the hedge beyond the gateway.

\* The leaves have fallen. Thanksgiving is just around the corner and winter is fast approaching. Along with the change in season comes the holidays. Before we become bogged down with the holiday preparations, the Ohio UERM alumni have already taken strides with the 13th Annual Reunion and Convention which will be held in Cleveland, Ohio on August 2 to 4, 2001. Although the big celebration is still 9 months away, the venue has been secured the resplendent and magnificent Renaissance Hotel. Programs for each day have been scheduled as follows:

- \* Day 1 Thursday, August 2, 2001 Golf and Tennis Tournaments (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.). Registration (12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.). Welcome reception sponsored by Ohio alumni (6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.) DANCING AND SHOWCASE OF TALENTS.
- \* Day 2 Friday, August 3, 2001 All day registration. Continuing Medical Education (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.). Silver Jubilarian Night (6:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight). Free night for other alumni.
- \* Day 3 Saturday, August 4, 2001 Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture, Dean and President Reports, UERMMMC Foundation Report, General Assembly, Business Meetings, GALA NIGHT DINNER DANCE, Youth Disco, ALUMNI CHAPTER DANCE COMPETITION.
- \* Day 4 Sunday, August 5, 2001 Executive Council Meeting followed by Alumni Foundation Meeting (8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.).

From the President

\* I have been a recipient of numerous queries pertaining to the venue of the next reunion and convention. "Why Cleveland?" Many still think of Cleveland as a straight-laced midwestern town where locals roll up the sidewalks at sunset and repeat ad nauseam the burning-river jokes cracked by late-night comedians.

\* You are in for a big surprise! Whoever you are, life-long residents or weekend visitors, Cleveland has got you covered!

\* Our convention site is THE RENAISSANCE HOTEL, recipient of the AAA Four Diamond Award, with a 22,500 square feet Grand Ballroom that could accommodate 3,000 guests. Located in the heart of downtown Cleveland, it is connected to the Avenue at Tower City Center that features 120 restaurants, exclusive shops for whatever you're looking for in fashion or one-of-a-kind boutiques, antiques, and cinemas. For places to go and things to do we have THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM which houses the world's most extensive collection of rock and roll artifacts, the musical spin on humanity for the past 50 years. THE FLAT DISTRICT, the waterfront district of eateries, pubs, DANCE CLUBS, which is open all night. GREAT LAKES SCIENCE CENTER, CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ARTS, MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY CEDAR POINT AMUSEMENT PARK AND RESORT voted the best amusement park in the world (Golden Ticket Award) for 2 years in a row. THE MILLENNIUM FORCE, 310 feet tall, is the "tallest in the universe." 14 roller coasters, 68 rides, and many more sensational shows for every age group. SEA WORLD OF OHIO and its great sharks, dolphins, whales, sea lions, and water ski show. For a standing encore of a weekend, there is shopping to sports, arts to attractions, dining to dance. Cool time hot city. COME ROCK! COME ROLL!

\* As we celebrate the 13th anniversary of our association, we can reflect on the giant steps we have made. We have accomplished a lot but there is much left to do. To this end I will need your cooperation as you have mine at all times. I equally challenge the new officers to realize our goals, strive forward, and articulate our inherent charge as leaders so we can have a focus greater than ourselves. Happy Holidays, everyone!

by Renato D. Querubin, M.D.

## Executive Director's Report

Get Involved!



Warm greetings from sunny Florida!

The outdoors beckon to everyone this time of the year in Florida. I compose this report in my patio overlooking papaya and orange trees with fruits beginning to turn yellow and "calamansi" laden with gold and yellow-green fruits. My thoughts occasionally stray towards a bountiful harvest.

Join me in welcoming and congratulating the new set of officers of the UERMMMC Medical Alumni Association in America who were inducted by Dean Esperanza Lansang during the 12th Annual Convention and Reunion Gala Affair at the Paris Casino Resort, Las Vegas, Nevada last August 4, 2000.

The 12th annual convention and reunion was a resounding success. Dr. Rolando Achacoso, '64, the overall chairman reported a very substantial net profit of over \$53,000. If I am not mistaken, this is the largest amount of profit in any of the past twelve conventions of the association. Let us tip our hats to the Nevada group for this accomplishment!

Preparations are underway for the 13th annual convention and reunion which will be held in Cleveland, Ohio on August 2-4, 2001 spearheaded by President Rene Querubin. He has appointed Dr. Norberto Bangayan, '64, to be the overall chairman. A glimpse of their agenda promises another enjoyable, memorable, informative, and hopefully lucrative affair. The silver jubilarian class of 1976 is led by Drs. Benilda Ramos-De Asis, Dave Austria, Ed Banez, and Cesar Yu.

For the first time in UERMMMC's history, a class (1961) will be celebrating its Ruby Jubilee (40th year). I urge all '61 graduates not to miss this once in a lifetime event.

If you noticed some changes in the format of our newsletter, it is because this is the maiden issue of Sammy Piga, '73, as editor-in-chief, assisted by Sonny Siasoco, '75, and associate editors Conrad Miranda and Totoy Castrence. Please pass along your copy of the newsletter to alumni who have not received any in the past. Please send their names, mailing and e-mail addresses, and fax/phone numbers to Secretary I. Manlapaz for inclusion in the association's directory and mailing list.

Application is being processed for a VISA and Mastercard account with Suntrust Bank so you can charge future payments and contributions to your Mastercard and VISA cards.

Please visit our web sites: uermmmc.org and uermmmcmaa@egroups.com. Register your e-mail address with our e-groups.com site so you will receive future news, announcements, schedule of events, etc via e-mail. Let us also use the site to announce new UERM graduates moving to your area and to change your mailing and contact information.

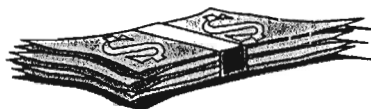
Lastly, continue to get involved with your local chapters and the national association and support UERMMMC through the foundation. I remain ready and able to serve as your executive director. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need assistance.

My family extends to yours our best wishes for a blissful and joyful holiday!

by Rolando A. Mendoza, M.D., '67

## TTTTTTTTTTTTTT TREASURY NOTES TTTTTTTTTTTTTTTT

|  |               |   |              |
|--|---------------|---|--------------|
| I. Balance from Dr. Eric Pua, out-going treasurer  | \$ 15,316.19  | B. Expenses   |              |
| II. 2000 Annual Convention Report from Dr. Rolando M. Achacoso, '64, Chairperson, dated 10-9-2000: |               | 1. Hotel Charges  | \$ 53,346.68 |
| A. Income  |               | 2. Printing   | \$ 3,375     |
| 1. Convention Fees Collected   |               | 3. Music  | \$ 2,900     |
| a. CME   | \$ 41,880     | 4. Office Expenses  | \$ 1,666.38  |
| b. Gala  | \$ 37,210     | 5. Miscellaneous  | \$ 1,812.86  |
| c. Ads/Exhibits  | \$ 12,825     | Total Expenses  | \$ 63,100.92 |
| d. Golf Tournament   | \$ 3,840      | C. Net Profit Remitted to Dr. Cristeta Magpantay, '69, incoming treasurer | \$ 53,451.82 |
| e. Youth Disco   | \$ 870        | III. Total Cash Position as of October 31, 2000                           | \$ 68,768.01 |
|  | \$ 96,625     |   |              |
| 2. Membership Fees   | \$ 8,600      |   |              |
| 3. Reimbursements  | \$ 11,327.74  |   |              |
| Total Income   | \$ 116,552.74 |   |              |







Silver Jubilarian Class of 1975 presented with medallions and



perform the traditional candle light ceremony at the gala night.



Class 1967 gets souvenir photos with Dean Lansang



and UERMMMC President Felipe B. Sese.



Happy Silver Jubilarians during a CME break. Left to right: Tom Lumicao (standing), Irene Ibanez, Rita Paraiso, Fe Icasas, and Luming San



Happy also are the faces of Silver Jubilarian Class '74 at their December, 1999 reunion in Manila.



The Convention Staff led by Dr. Achacoso man the registration desk.



Silent Auctioneers, left to right: Drs. Penney Miranda, Gemma Mendoza, and Ester Querubin.

CONVENTION 2000 SUNDAYS



Dr. Benjamin V Narajos, '63, left, delivers the Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture. Right, Rep. Shelley Berkley, D-Nevada, is guest speaker.



Open Forum Panelists-Drs. Ben Rigor, UERM Pres. Felipe Sese, Dean Lansang, Foundation Chair El Castro, and Pres. Henry Yanez (Phil.).



Participants listen attentively to the CME and general assembly meetings.



President Querubin presents the Service Award Plaque to out-going President Benjamin Rigor.



Convention Chairman Dr. Rolando Achacoso and wife Simplicia with Executive Director Dr. Rolando and Gemma Mendoza.



Dr. Rigor and family pose with Doctors Lansang.



Beauty Enhances Beauty! Drs. Sonia Castaneda, '67 and Gemma Mendoza, U.P. '69 flanked by two chorus girls.



Boundless Grace! Angie De Vera, '75 and hubby do ballroom, left, while Totoy and Elsie Castrence do the Argentine tango.



## Ru (Paging) Puyat 11

by Ida Kikiam, M.D., '00,  
daughter of Ong de Kiam, M.D., '67

*In former years, with eyes unclear  
I state, no hesitation, without reservation  
Of all wondrous contentment,  
From blessed state of retirement*

*Now older and much wiser  
To all I beg to differ  
From earlier pronouncements  
To escape all you indictments*

*The problem is not retired or not retired  
But that at least you tried  
And tried your best  
That really is the test*

*More to the point is how you view  
Your work, your life  
And don't forget your wife  
And all the others too.*

*Retirement is for some  
For some more work is sound  
Where you would fall  
Is yours alone to call*

To be continued:  
Roberto Castrence, M.D., '68

## NEWS BRIEFS

continued from page 2

alumni foundation scholarship fund..

**More Scholarship for UERMMMC-** Three Filipino medical societies in which UERM alumni are actively involved recently made the College of Medicine the recipient of need-based scholarship. The North Texas Association of Philippine Physicians (NTAPP), Greater St. Louis Area medical group, and another recently pledged 3 partial scholarships to deserving but needy medical students. NTAPP particularly committed to a four-year funding for its scholar chosen by the College of Medicine's committee on scholarship.

**Alumni Foundation Meets in Las Vegas-** The UERMMMC- MAAA Foundation, Inc. held its annual meeting during the recently concluded 12th annual convention on August 5, 2000. Dr. El Castro, chairman, reported on the current accounts and activities of this charitable arm of the alumni association. At the meeting, attended also by Drs. Lansang, Sese, and Yanez from the Philippines, the board approved a new fiscal year budget and outlined an ambitious 5-year plan to generate greater and sustainable alumni giving to fund various programs at the College of Medicine. The board appropriated its available resources to selected items from a wish list turned in by the college. Five new members of the board were also elected to a 3-year term ending in 2003. They were: Drs. Manuel Blas, Bayani Elma, Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, and Renato Raymundo.

## Las Vegas to Manila, Silver Jubilee Continues

by Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, M.D.

After months of letters, phone calls, e-mails and hours in the website chat room, members of class 1975 and their families finally reunited at Paris Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. At the welcome reception on Wednesday afternoon, August 2, 2000 hosted by the Las Vegas Convention Organizing Committee, everybody was just happy to see each other after 25 years. Six classmates from Manila joined the 26 U.S.-based classmates in the first silver jubilee reunion of the 21st century. Everybody seemed to have grown mature, but not old, have blossomed into fine "seasoned" individuals confident of their career and family life. We talked, joked, teased, reminisced, and bonded with each other. We remembered classmates who passed away so young. But, most of all, we met each other's outstanding spouses. We rekindled our 25-year-old friendship and made new friends.

The day after Gala Night we felt the sadness of parting (separation anxiety!), but we knew our bond was stronger. We are all just an e-mail or phone call away. And, we look forward to our grand reunion in Manila this December. Our classmates in Manila headed by Tony "Bimbo" Sibulo are coordinating and preparing for the 1st great reunion of the new millennium. We are all anticipating the "members only" batch night party at Ed Huang's place. There will be no accounting as to who and what will be the topic(s) of conversation. So everyone should attend and join the fun. Of course, there will be the baccalaureate mass, scientific symposium, golf, shopping, etc. At the Gala Night, beside the presence of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the introduction of the Silver Jubiliarians and other alumni, class 1975 members will present a special number that they have practiced for months (oops! I mean a few days). But, the *piece de resistance* is our overnight class outing in Tagaytay Highlands, a resort that can be compared with nice resorts here in the U.S. and other places. There will be spectacular views of the mountains, lake, and greeneries to feast our eyes on, good restaurants to enjoy the culinary delights, and good walking trail and swimming pool to burn those calories. For last, but not least, there will be GOLF, GOLF, GOLF and more time to TALK, TALK, TALK. See you all in Manila!

## Thank You, UERM

by Laurence T. Gayao, M.D., '71

Twenty-nine years after leaving UERM, I am still amazed at how much the basic training I got from our medical school has helped me in my emergency room practice. This is true in spite of the rigors and unjust treatment that many of us still complain we had received then.

At UERM, not only did we learn to work long hours, but also to endure threats of summary punishment by resident physicians for real or imagined infractions. Even after two to three decades, we still refer to many of our former superiors as "terrors."

We acquired diplomatic skills in dealing with nurses who could make or break us with a mere report to the resident-in-charge when we did not comply with their wishes. We developed thick skins from being grilled repeatedly by residents and consultants in front of our classmates and patients as though we did not know anything.

Little did we know that those experiences prepared us to face the many forms of discrimination and struggles in this our adopted country.

Remember when we were required to type our patients' histories and physical examinations? Many of us then did not even own or touch a typewriter. Me? I found a second-hand portable typewriter and learned to type from a manual. Sometimes it took me 3 hours to type those records!

Well, little did I know that such skill would come in handy with computers in this internet age as we now use computers at work to access references instead of opening books, and make patient discharge instructions.

Likewise, during our clerkship, we were asked to make detailed history and physical examination reports. This taught us to make records that have protected us in the litigious environment we practice in today, and documentations that have improved reimbursements from third party payors.

Just a few years back, we thought that the more tests we ordered the better physicians we were. Then managed care changed all that, brought in evidence-based medicine, and demanded prudent use of resources. Now, performance is gauged by individual physician practice patterns so much so that the more diagnostic tests and medications we order *efficiently*, the better doctors we are.

Our resources at UERM were so limited. Few diagnostic tests were available. We even had to do CBCs, urinalysis, and stool exams by ourselves so we learned to rely more on history and physical exam and to think twice before doing tests to initiate patient management.

Medicine has advanced so much since we left our dear Alma Mater, but most of us would agree that many of the basic skills she taught us have helped us survive and remain competitive in our respective fields of medical practice even in this modern age.

Thank you, UERM

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# Editorial

## Where to, Alumni? An Introspection



Greetings to all of you! First, I thank our leadership for the opportunity and confidence given me to serve you. I am very grateful for this honor.

In preparing for this issue, I have come to know the officers and active members of the association, been impressed by their dedication, and was drawn by their openness and warm welcome.

As I begin to chronicle events, people, and ideas in the association, I can sense from them a passion for our Alma Mater that springs from a deep gratitude for the education we received and pride in the achievements it has enabled us. In essence, this organization, its leaders, and members, young and old, seek to bring us together as one family.

A family then marks its milestones, shares in its failings, celebrates its triumphs, and dreams of its glories. That is why this our alumni family that reaches out to all of us comes home at reunions, rejoices at jubilees, and recommit to itself when we part from one another.

I invite you then to reconnect with our Alma Mater by joining in the many well-thought-out activities of our alumni family through what Dr. El Castro calls as "your gifts of time, talent, and treasure."

I will strive through these pages to give you a taste of what we all hold dear as values and ideals that define us as children of our Alma Mater so that we can all truly partake of its sustaining goodness and best intentions.

As a family then, our conventions become our taking stock, our dialogues become our healing, our recollections renewal, laughter our contentment, and service our reward.

When we arrive at that point, we know we will have built an alumni family that reflects on an admirable institution of the highest learning.

by Samuel A. Piga, M.D.

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How does one write an upbeat pre-x'mas newsletter when one's home is burning? I am, of course, referring to the Philippine crisis where our leaders are crooks, the economy is in a free fall, the currency sinking daily, the threat of a coup hanging over the country, the people up in arms and the ownership of one's own Alma Mater is in the thick of all the problems. Luckily, this is not my problem but Sam's. It is very interesting how he is going to maneuver through these treacherous waters.

Luckily for Sam, the Filipino is a master of denial. When modern poet T.S. Elliot wrote "man can only take reality a little at a time," he did not know the Filipino. We, more than any people, seem to weather any storm whether it be natural disasters like typhoons, floods, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, or man made catastrophes like martial law, gross human right abuses, being buried in garbage dumps, stock scandals, and gross corruption and incompetence in government. But even the Filipino has his limits as to how much he can take. This is well and good.

This capacity for denial is the reason for the so-called resiliency of the Filipinos, a trait that is admirable, but like anything, if used excessively turns the very virtue into vice. It is like our good cultural values of *pakikisama* and *utang na loob* which, when used to the extreme, cause nepotism, cronyism, and corruption. The answers to these are balance and critical thinking, traits that we as a young nation have yet to learn. There are positive movements in the country towards these but unfortunately they are not yet enough. Maybe the Filipino has to learn not to suffer silently too much.

With such happy thoughts, and not in denial, I do wish everyone Happy Holidays! Now, in complete denial, my thoughts on the last reunion. As usual I enjoyed the affair immensely. Seeing old friends, watching their growth and meeting new friends or just seeing old acquaintances but with a new set of eyes has always given me quite a joy. The last reunion was no exception. Of course, there are also the sad news but that is life, *hindi ba?*

Watching fellow alumni, I did not realize how many red-headed classmates we had but then maybe my eyes were looking at the books all the time and did not notice. I also saw that we were aging faster than our teachers. Is it the water? Again, it must be my failing eyesight. But just in case it was true, I warned Dean Lansang to drink only soda or bottled water. I don't know if she did. I'll find out when I see her next time.

I have heard complaints about the cost of CMEs. Some commented that in spite of the sponsorship of the CMEs by Clairol, Pfizer, and the makers of Rogaine and Propecia, the cost was still very high. Naturally, I referred them to Rene.

An idea that I often heard at the reunion was why don't we change the venue of the reunion to a cruise instead of the usual cities. I heard again the issue of cost. Because of it, some classes like mine, '68, as well as '64, '65, and '69 have elected to go on their own cruises. Maybe the issue can be taken up by the higher bodies of the association if so many classes feel this way.

by Roberto S. Castrence, M.D.

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 Half-page \$125; Quarter page \$75. Please make checks payable to UERMMMC-  
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### Calling all classes 1976, 1971, 1966, and 1961!!!

You are hereby summoned by your Alumni Association under authority of the prime directive of the Alma Mater to come to the 13th Annual National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio on August 2-5, 2001 to accept the honors of becoming silver, pearl, jade, and for the 1st time, ruby jubilarians, respectively. Come one, come all!

Make plans and watch for future announcements on this event. Details will appear on the February issue of the newsletter

For silver jubilarian class '76, please log on to [www.uermclass76@egroups.com](mailto:www.uermclass76@egroups.com) or contact Ed Banez (818-882-4767, [ebanez6165@aol.com](mailto:ebanez6165@aol.com)), Dave Austria (215-579-4407, [dmaus4900@aol.com](mailto:dmaus4900@aol.com)), or Bee Ramos-De Asis (806-296-5194, [brdeasis@aol.com](mailto:brdeasis@aol.com)). Or Boy Abraham at [doclabjr@pacifinet.net](mailto:doclabjr@pacifinet.net) (Philippines).

Plans are underway for a 2001 edition of the Class 1976 Yearbook (Aesculapius) which will include, besides the 1976 photo, the following which everyone is requested to submit on or before **January 15, 2001** (1) a recent 5" x 7" photo preferably in formal attire; (2) a family photo, if applicable, size 8" x 10;" and (3) personal information sheet.

These may be mailed to Ed Banez at 8425 Yolanda Ave., North Ridge, CA 91324. For questions, please contact Rod Nitollama at [nitollama@globalink.net.ph](mailto:nitollama@globalink.net.ph). Rod and Boy Abraham will be attending the AAOS early next year in San Francisco.

Everybody in '76 is encouraged to participate in the Silver Jubilee edition regardless of marital status, occupation (practicing or non-practicing), graduation date (May June, or October), or other factors. If you didn't join the 1976 Yearbook, this is your chance. Send also a 1976 picture with the above if you still have it.

### More Class '76 Info

Classmates in Manila have formed committees for next year's Silver Jubilee celebration. Please take note.

President Boy Abraham/Rod Nitollama  
Vice-President Noel Carillo

Secretary Fidelis Foronda/Irene Roman-Igual

Treasurer Stennie Salva-Sibulo/Remy Cotangco/Susan Puga-Que

PRO Ed Firmalo

Committees:

Ways & Means- Noel Carillo/Nick Cruz

Program Ed Firmalo

1976 Class Projects Dick Que

Publicity & Silver Jubilee Yearbook  
Rod Nitollama

Local Liaison Irene Roman-Igual

The USA schedule is already detailed in page 3. **Manila, Philippines**, Dec. 12-16, 2001's is as follows:

Day 1 Wednesday, Dec. 12 Welcome Reception//Dinner, Class '76 members only.

Day 2 Thursday, Dec. 13 UERM Alumni Activities (tba)

Day 3 Friday, Dec. 14 UERM Alumni Ball/Fellowship Night

Day 4 & 5-Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 15-16  
UERM Class '76 Family Excursion (tba).



## The Alumni Newsletter

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