

Thanks to outgoing officers, welcome to new ones!



The Alumni Newsletter

Post-Convention Issue

Plano, Texas

November 2002

Hawaii salutes '77, installs Rastrollo



Class 1977's Mighty Twelve receive the accolade of their peers at the gala night, August 3, 2002, Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel, Honolulu.

Class 2001's 66% board passing draws mixed reactions

One hundred forty of the 212 UERM batch 2001, the last of the traditional curriculum, passed the most recent physician licensure examinations in the Philippines given this past August. They joined the 1,482 successful examinees out of a total of 2,507 candidates nationwide. None placed in the top ten whose composite grades ranged from 84.83% to 86.75%. The new physicians took their oath before the Board of Medicine chaired by Dr. Rodolfo de Guzman in a special ceremony at the Philippine International Convention Center, Manila on September 15, 2002. The results were published in the on-line edition of the Philippine Daily Inquirer three days after the last test day.

The Dean's office through Dr. Florina Estrada, college secretary, described the 66% passing rate of our graduates as "dismal" but added that "even if we did poorly in the exam, we still managed to be number three in the overall ranking of all medical schools" with at least 100 graduates. Reliable sources ranked U.P. number 1, UST next, UERM third, followed by FEU, and MCU. The second group of those with less than 100 examinees, according to the same sources, put CIM at the top, followed by West Visayas State U, St. Luke's, Paman-tasan, La Salle, Angeles UF, and Fatima in that order.

Reactions from the administration and alumni centered on the whys and what can we do. Estrada said that "most believed that this batch was somehow *not* given enough attention" as it was "transitional" and the faculty was "busy" with the implementation of the new PBL curriculum. Dean Valdellon in early September promptly got management to fund a tuition-free review course and appointed Dr. Felicidad Soto to conduct one for those who failed in August. The next exams are up in February, 2003.

Former Dean Lansang in an open correspondence with U.S. based alumni said that our graduates did poorly in the "case-based" exams because they were ill-prepared to answer clinical questions. "I have been saying while I was dean that our students **continued on page 4**

Blas beats Casibang for president-elect

The 14th annual convention and reunion held August 1-3 lived up to what are now

UERM alumni traditions of non-stop fun, quality scientific program, productive business meetings, and generous giving, as some 120 graduates from across the United States gathered at the posh Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel in Honolulu to honor the jubilarians led by class 1977's "mighty 12," greet the new medical center administration, and inaugurate Dr. Joseph Rastrollo, '73, as the 8th president of the association.

Sports events kicked off day 1 of the festivities followed by the alumni foundation's marathon annual meeting which elected Elmer Gilo, '73, as treasurer to serve out the term of Nely Recano, '63, who resigned the position but stayed on as trustee.

In a break from tradition, the welcome reception hosted by the national leadership and host committee was scrapped in favor of a *luau* on opening night. **continued on page 2**

NE gears up for New York-2003

The Northeast Chapter, next year's convention hosts, sprung into action immediately as the dust from last August's has yet to settle. Its incoming president, Alex Bobila and first lady Debbie Ames-Bobila, both of '73, conducted a written survey of the Hawaii attendees as to their preferences and needs and distributed invitation flyers touting the allure of the Big Apple.

At its meeting in late August attended by coordinators of next year's jubilarian classes of '63, '68, '73, and '78, the chapter voted 2 to 1 in favor of a Ritz Carlton-Regent Hotel double venue. The host committee's negotiators spent the whole month of September squeezing concessions from the two downtown (lower Manhattan) hotels.

In a related tax-saving move, the alumni association and foundation leaderships agreed to officially hold the 15th **continued on page 2**

Hawaii salutes . . . continued from page 1 2nd leadership workshop slated for Dec. 14

Day two saw a 9-hour category 1 CME session featuring mostly UERMMMC alumni led by silver jubilarians Randy Puno and Stuart Goodman, and ruby jubilarian Alberto Querimit as well as Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Jr., current vice-president for academic affairs and former dean who delivered the 2002 Dr. Jose Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture. That evening, no silver jubilarian batch party was held. Instead, the '77ers joined other classes in a sold out big and happy dinner cruise around Honolulu Bay. A smaller group of alumni led by the pearl jubilarian class of '72 stayed ashore, feasted at Today, and enjoyed a hilarious musical variety show starring S.O.S., a top Filipino band along Waikiki's entertainment alley.

Reports and pledges

August 3, the busiest and final day of the convention, heard reports from Drs. Erlinda Valdellon, '63, new dean of the College of Medicine, Romeo Divinagracia, '63, president of the medical center, El Castro, also of '63, chairman of the UERMMMC Alumni Foundation USA, Inc., and outgoing president Renato Querubin, '67

In her presentation, Valdellon batted for her information technology project which she hoped would enhance the implementation of the PBL curriculum. Divinagracia, for his part, reassured the general assembly that the medical center is working to be competitive in the local medical education and healthcare marketplace. Castro set the tone for gift-giving with a reassuring report on the effectiveness of currently funded projects and an impassioned plea for support particularly for the endowment fund that was launched late last year. Querubin took note of the need to increase membership in the association through close collaboration with Philippine-based alumni to help U.S.-bound graduates. His parting words: "service does not come in a manual it comes from the heart!"

As in past conventions, delegates did not disappoint the dean as individual alumni and classes gobbled up nearly all of the dean's wish list in the auction following the said reports, pledging approximately \$30,000 in cash and in-kind. The silent auction and raffle conducted by the auxiliary, Alliance and Friends, Inc, pulled in \$3,097

Elections and new leaders

In the election which rounded up the day's morning session, Manuel Blas, '67, president of the Midwest Chapter, came from behind to beat Isabelita B. Casibang, '72, of the MarVaDC chapter by a vote of 42 to 27 for president-elect. In his campaign speech prior to the secret balloting, Blas pledged to fight for the continued growth of the alumni association by reaching out to the younger graduates. Seeking to become the first woman president, Casibang in turn parlayed her experience in organized medicine in a bid to lead the organization to a new vitality and unity. Dr. Sanchez acted as the vote canvasser of the spirited contest.

The silver jubilarians, in a show of fresh enthusiasm and unity, boldly stepped up to the leadership plate by putting up an unopposed slate made up of Susan Perez-Suntay for vice-president, Merlyn Asuncion, already the Southern California Chapter PRO, for secretary, and Sonia Rico-Todd, treasurer. In his acceptance speech, Blas affirmed that "my commitment to my *alma mater* is total and my commitment to you is the same!" Suntay-Perez echoing Blas' campaign theme proclaimed that "I intend to wage that war for membership!" In a related development days before the convention, incoming president Rastrollo, a California anesthesiologist, named his appointees to his administration headed by Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, '75, the outgoing secretary, as executive director to replace Rolando Mendoza, '67, who is currently the Florida Chapter leader who resigned the last year of his three-year term.

At the annual meeting of the executive council that afternoon, the association ratified Chicago and Houston as the hosts for the 2004 and 2005 conventions and set aside a \$35,000 donation to the alumni foundation for Dean Valdellon's information technology project.

Querubin passes torch to Rastrollo as Class '77 receive jubilarian candles

In a fitting finale to the 14th national reunion, a gala was held that night in which Renato Querubin, '67, passed on the mantle of leadership to Joseph Rastrollo in a ceremony officiated by Honolulu Councilor Romy Cachola. Others sworn in were Manuel Blas, president-elect, Susan Perez-Suntay, vice-president, Merlyn Asuncion, secretary, and Sonia Rico-Todd, treasurer. Querubin thanked everyone who had helped his administration and encouraged the new team to "promote unity and solidarity." Rastrollo in his inaugural speech accepted the challenge as he paid tribute to all his predecessors and asked all alumni to do the same. Twelve silver jubilarians who were introduced with their families by Dr. Romeo Divinagracia received their ceremonial candles and commemorative medallions from their peers. They later gave inspired renditions of a popular graduation song and the Beatles' hit "In My Life" together with their spouses and children as their old class photos were projected on a screen. Also honored were the wise ruby class of '62, the solid jade class of '67, and happy pearl class of '72. The youngest class represented at the gala was 1998.

The Philippine Consul General of Honolulu who graced the occasion exhorted those present to "keep up your professionalism, you bring much pride to our country!" In his address, Fortunato Elizaga, '67, overall convention chairman, expressed satisfaction in the 3-day gathering and thanked everyone for coming saying "We have so much fun playing your host!" and echoed Councilor Cachola's invitation for them to "stay in Honolulu longer." Erlinda Magsalin Cachola also of '67 was the evening's emcee. About 220 were on hand for the occasion.

The second leadership workshop jointly sponsored by the alumni foundation and association will be held on Saturday, December 14, 2002 at the Marriott Courtyard in Elizabeth, New Jersey. This was announced in early October by Amor Castro, foundation secretary. The Northeast Chapter will again host the day-long event.

As in the first workshop held last December in Newark, the upcoming meeting aims to train present and future officers of both organizations in the proper conduct of their respective operations. Expected to attend are the newly installed officers of both groups. Alumni who are interested in learning more about the inner workings of their two organizations are most welcome to attend this informative seminar.

Earlier plans to hold the workshop during the annual convention were put off due to a very tight schedule. Convention organizers are looking at including it in the future. In addition to the topics covered last year, the next workshop is expected to emphasize goal orientation, parliamentary procedures, and financial management. For details, please see page 14 or contact Amor Castro elamor@optonline.net or Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, association executive director at imanlapaz@hotmail.com.

NE gears up . . . from page 1

national convention and reunion together. As of presstime, minor issues are being worked out by both entities with the host chapter.

In a memo to foundation president Conrad Miranda and association president Rastrollo in late September, Ames-Bobila reported that the contracts with the Ritz and Regent hotels had been signed by overall convention chairman Alex Bobila on behalf of both alumni organizations. She adds "it's now official, our 15th annual convention will be at the Ritz Carlton/The Regent Wall Street, New York. It is now time to work together in unity to make this annual convention the most memorable ever. After all, we have one goal and that is to help improve our *alma mater*!"

Meanwhile the national association, in an *en banc* decision undertaken by Rastrollo and executive director Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, announced the fees for next year's event and already posted an invitation through its e-mail loop for all alumni to pre-register. See page 15 for details.

Sanchez explains 2nd revolution in medical education

Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Jr., UERMMMC vice-president for academic affairs, concurrent dean of the new graduate school, former dean of the College of Medicine and executive director of the APMC (Association of Philippine Medical Colleges), this year's Dr. Jose Cuyegkeng Memorial lecturer, declared the obsolescence of the "conventional system of medical education," the so-called traditional method. He said that this system started in



Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Jr. is awarded a plaque of appreciation by alumni officials after delivering the luncheon Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture on August 2nd.

1910 "dichotomized" the preclinical and clinical phases of instruction, was too "teacher-centered" and only led to "hospital-based, technology-driven" practices by "laboratory-oriented" and "overspecialized" physicians, and eventually, costly and ineffective health care system.

Changing conditions in the Philippines and abroad spurred on a movement to reform medical education, starting with the 1978 ALMA ALTA

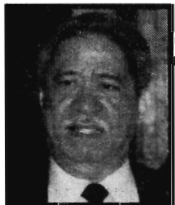
declaration that emphasized primary health care, access equality, and social accountability, he continued. "Worldwide events affecting human life like science and technology advancement, sociopolitical activities, scientific diaspora, drug problem, terrorism and globalization could no longer be ignored."

"How do we prepare the Filipino physician

UERM started it in 1998 and graduated its first batch last May. He hoped that this would end the "fragmentation" of academic disciplines and integrate all areas of health. Furthermore, he foresaw a physician who is capable of independent learning yet socially responsible, and open-minded. He ended his talk by restating his commitment to medical education at home especially at UERMMMC.

for the next century. in light of more top-heavy centralization of the delivery of services, declining health care expenditures, blurring of the patient-doctor relationship" and the ominous "encroachment of HMOs in the Philippines?" he asked.

A "second revolution" in medical education was then launched by the APMC in 1993, he answered, that resulted in the shift to the innovative curriculum by over half of the 31 medical schools in the country.



State of UERMMMC: in the black and poised to compete

Dr. Romeo A. Divinagracia, who took over from Dr. Felipe B. Sese as president last year

gave a sober picture of UERMMMC's financial health on the final day of the Hawaii convention. In contrast with the dark days of his first tenure at the helm in 1995 when the Board of Trustees decided to close down the center barely one month after his installation due to severe financial strain, Divinagracia reported a net income of P4.6 M from gross income of P285.2 M over expenses of P281.6 in the just ended fiscal year. Though down from last year's net of P8.8 M, this is the second year in a row that the medical center turned in a profit.

The large majority of income continued to be from tuition and school fees paid by students in the three colleges of the center. The rest is from hospital revenues which have improved due to an increased occupancy in the pay hospital, up 68% over last year's 50%. He attributed this to better marketing and the renovations in the pay hospital.

Charity admissions remain at 40%.

In the academic front, he said that medical, nursing and physical therapy graduates continue to rank high in their respective board examinations. He also announced the steady evolution of the new graduate school headed by Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Jr., which now offers master's degrees in internal medicine with majors in diabetes, gastroenterology, OB-GYN, and ENT, public health/community medicine, nursing and physical therapy. He did not mention however the current enrollment figures in the new college.

He also acknowledged a near-100 drop in freshman enrollment due to the opening of the San Beda College of Medicine and increased enrollment at the UST College of Medicine.

He took pride in the on-going improvement of the faculty through the center's active support for more masteral studies by them.

Divinagracia spoke of a bright future for the medical center as he invoked the enthusiasm of what he called the "Class '63 triumvirate of Divinagracia, Valdellon, and Castro" that is now leading its academic march. He revealed that infrastructure projects in the hospital and medical school buildings are near completion, with plan for a 5-storey building which will connect the charity and pay hospitals.

He outlined a 10-point agenda for the next three years: 1) fully adopt the PBL for all colleges, 2) curriculum improvement and implementation, 3) strengthening faculty through graduate program and clinical training, 4) better selection of students and faculty, 5) more scholarships for students and faculty, 6) upgrade research capability & quality, 7) improve alumni relations through an office of alumni affairs and a website with virtual lobby, 8) alumni involvement in impact projects, 9) IT improvement, and 10) augmenting the indigent fund with a goal of P3 M for more clinical materials (patients).



Dean bats for information technology

Dean Erlinda V. Valdellon presented a different dean's report at the annual meeting's general assembly in Honolulu last August 3rd. Instead of the expected recitation of school statistics, problems and accom-

plishments, she made a persuasive appeal for alumni investment in a single project which she described as the linchpin of a fully developed innovative curriculum. Information technology in PBL, that is.

She dazzled fellow alumni with a vision of an entire college campus that is on-line. To maximize efficiency in administration, teaching, and learning, she reasoned. She previewed an infrastructure made up of a paperless dean's office, electronically integrated faculty, and limitless cyberlibrary and learning materials for students. The price tag? About \$50,000 which she hoped would be matched by a capital outlay from the administration.

Why ask alumni for help? With the authority of a mother—yes indeed, she is the alumni's mom as she teased "I am married to UERM!"—she unabashedly asked for it because we are family. Although she admitted she didn't know how alumni in the U.S. would react to her request, she felt strongly that they would come through. Nevertheless, she was pleasantly surprised how they did. She was not disappointed. Those in attendance fully supported the deans' departmental wish list with a pledge amounting to around \$50,000 after her speech. Not only that, few hours later, the alumni association through one of outgoing president Dr. Rene Querubin's last official acts, donated \$35,000 to the alumni foundation toward Dean Valdellon's IT initiative. When she got back to Manila, she informed the editor that P.O. Domingo, the UERMMMC chairman had committed to a start-up funding for it.

She responded also to two other alumni questions during the open forum: "How will you increase the clinical materials available to students?" By more affiliations such as that with San Juan Hospital currently in the works, on top of ones already with East Avenue Hospital, Quirino (Labor) Hospital, National Children's Hospital, and National Orthopedic Hospital, and by beefing up the indigent fund which currently receives P50,000 per charity patient through the PCSO (Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office).

"How else do you plan to involve alumni during your term?" By aggressively getting them back to teach at UERM, she replied.

How can we say no?

Class 2001's . . . continued from page 1

in the clinics should not be performing menial tasks—putting them on call every other day but the clinicians say 'we did that during our time' so maybe this is a wake-up call." Students should be "given sometime on their own to do some reading," she stressed.

Alumni have weighed in on the matter also. Nely Saturno-Recano, '63, and past treasurer of the alumni foundation, felt "disappointed and sad" just like Ida Tiongco, '68, a visiting professor of dermatology at UERM. Students are not as good as the better ones are attracted to competing schools that have "better facilities and lower tuition," Recano echoed Dr. Divinagracia's comments in Hawaii. She also cited the dissatisfaction of faculty about their salaries and the students' complaints against some faculty's absenteeism, tardiness, and inability to foster a positive learning experience given their attitude of instilling fear on students and discouraging them from asking questions. Last year's survey done by the alumni foundation confirmed that, she said. She also decried the failure of the hospital to provide students with enough patients to learn from. Her solution, more targeted funding from the alumni foundation.

Vickie Barnachea-Casibang, '71, suggested the active solicitation of non-alumni donors through local charity projects. These she said would be effective magnets for robust fundraising. Roberto Castrence, '68, newsletter associate editor, asked a more profound question: are test questions "biased towards specialty knowledge" and American oriented cases? He submitted that medical education should aspire for "what is good for society at large" by emphasizing preventive medicine over the more expensive curative one. Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, '75, agreed with Lansang and Recano's ideas.

continued on page 14

Dateline Philippines

Awards galore!

The local UERMMMC Medical Alumni Association recognized many successful alumni during the medical center's 46th foundation day last June. Check this out, all presidents! Antonio Villalon, '70, Philippine College of Physicians; Antonio Sibulo, '75, Cardiac Rehabilitation Society of the Philippines; Noe Babilonia, '75, Philippine Heart Association; Lauro Abrahan, '76, Philippine Orthopedic Association; Sonia Rodriguez, '86, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry of the Philippines; Floro Madarcos, '76, Philippine Association of Academic Biochemists; Fidel Payawal, '73, Philippine Society of Anesthesiologists; Joven Cuanang, '62, Stroke Society of the Philippines. How about them hospital directors? Rosalinda Arandia, '70, Quirino Memorial Medical Center; Edgardo Salud, '73, Quezon City General Hospital; Christia Padolina, '83, Ospital Ng Maynila; Juanito Evangelista, '86, Healthway Medical Clinics; and Teodosio Alcantara, '91, Seamen's Hospital (Cebu).

ENT holds 10th postgraduate course

The Department of Otorhinolaryngology under Alejandro Opulencia, '73, held its 10th annual postgraduate program on August 10 at the hospital auditorium. Entitled "Non-Surgical Aspects of Head & Neck Cancer Management," the course covered hospice care, nutrition, gamma knife treatment that now costs P220,000-350,000 in the country, chemotherapy, RAI therapy, pain management, psychiatry and support groups, radiotherapy, and PET scan. Speakers came from all over MetroManila. The program was fully underwritten by a generous consortium of pharmaceutical and medical supply companies in the area and was therefore completely free, registration, sumptuous lunch, heavy *merienda*, *pabaon* and all! Who says there is no such thing as free lunch? That was a very informative and really first rate CME, Andro! Now if only the killjoys in the "conflict of interest" crowd here in America will only have a little life

UERMMH to become an open hospital

To ensure the viability of the hospital, the administration is now considering opening it to all qualified UERMMMC alumni for practice. "To increase the occupancy rate and utilization of facilities" and "improve our relationship with our alumni who remain a good source of financial support for our projects," states the souvenir program of the 46th foundation day. It's about time!

NEWS BRIEFS

Dateline USA**Shortage of physicians in 5 years**

Physician Financial News in its April 30, 2002 issue warned of an impending shortage of physicians as early as 2005. Citing negative factors like decline in professional prestige brought about by managed care and government regulation, upsurge in malpractice suits and cost of insurance, and the lure of other careers with easier lifestyle, the report projected a 5% per year drop in medical school enrollement. Down the line, fewer residency applicants especially in primary programs are now seen. These shortfalls are expected to be filled in by nurse practitioners, PAs and others, predicted the article. *Quo vadis?*

Adopt a specialty mulled

Brainstorming is one exercise that meetings bring about. In an alumni convention such as ours, this is geared toward the improvement of the *Alma Mater*. So last August in Hawaii, the outgoing Executive Director Roly Mendoza, '67 got together with Romy Divinagracia, '63, and agreed to develop an "Adopt a Specialty" program starting with cardiology in which like specialists in the U.S. will assist their counterparts at UERM in terms of equipment, teaching materials, etc. Sounds like a good compliment to the one already being done by the alumni foundation with the dean's wish list, faculty development awards, and research awards. Keep on Roly!

Tort reform passes House

A federal tort reform legislation heavily supported by organized medicine and is very similar to the one already in place in California recently passed by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives in Congress. However, its fate in the Democrat-controlled Senate is uncertain. "The bill would cap noneconomic damages at \$250,000, allow future economic damages to be paid over time, and place a three-year statute of limitations for most medical malpractice cases," reported the *AMA News* last month. Keep your vigilance up. Be ready to flood the Senate with your e-mails in support of its passage when the right time comes. Meanwhile, study your candidates' stands on the issue and vote on November 5 wisely. This is a one-time shot but we just might pull it off. Do the same for your state legislative and judicial races. Expect to hear from our strong advocate, Vickie Casibang.

Soloists are back

The *AM News* in its Nov. 4 issue reported that doctors across the country have begun a shift back to "one-and two-doctor practices." The reason? The economics of large-scale practices has been a disappointment to many.

UERMMMC Research Output

In this issue, we are pleased to introduce a new section on the research activities of the College of Medicine. It will mostly contain excerpts of original works from the campus but notable papers presented or published by alumni in the Philippines and elsewhere will also be included as we receive them. Readers interested in the details of any articles are referred to the sources or can request them from the newsletter. This maiden installment is from the UERMMMC Journal of Health Sciences, Vol.5, No. 1, January to April 2002, edited by Dr. Rene Edgar Mendoza. All of these papers are authored by medical students and have been presented in the annual research forum during alumni homecoming week in December. The new PBL curriculum now requires students to undertake complete research projects and present them in such a forum attended by students, faculty, and national experts. Editor

Bangungot is still a mystery. A retrospective, cross-sectional study of *bangungot* cases in the national capital region from 1995 to 1999 was done using NBI autopsy records of all cases of sudden death during sleep of previously healthy persons regardless of cause. The highest cases were recorded in the 25 to 29 year-age group, all confirmed ones were males, 40% were unskilled workers, occurring in the peak months of November, May and June. Acute hemorrhagic pancreatitis is still no. 1 pathology (66%), followed by acute myocardial infarction (16%) and others (18%). Review of literature suggested this phenomenon as uniquely Asian yet etiology is still unknown. The study recognized its limitations in sampling and other variables that prevented it from accurately describing the extent and pattern of occurrence of the condition in the MetroManila area. *A Cross-Sectional Study on the Occurrence of Bangungot in the National Capital Region From 1995 to 1999* by Patricia Cristine G. Po, Marie Eilleen C. Poblete, Christine N. Pecson, Ma. Melba S. Patriarca, Ann Catherine O. Poblete, Brigido Carandang, Jr., M.D., adviser.

Siling labuyo for otomycosis. *Capsicum frutescens* (*siling labuyo*) fruit infusion with a concentration of 3 g/ml was compared with 4% acetic acid (positive control) and distilled water (negative control) on their inhibitory effect on the growth of *Aspergillus fumigatus*, using the agar well diffusion method. The former showed a 90% increase in the mean zone of inhibition diameter and a 175% increase in the antimicrobial index which are significantly higher than the 4% acetic acid's. The study concludes that *C. frutescens* is a desirable option over acetic acid in combating the fungal growth of most common agents of otomycosis as well as any possible bacterial coinfection. It went on to note the wide use of its active ingredient capsaicin as a topical stimulant, rubefacient, and counterirritant. *An Experimental Study to Determine the Efficacy of Capsicum frutescens (Siling Labuyo) Against Aspergillus fumigatus In Vitro* by Christine O. Verzola, Edward S. Victoria, Christina R. Villamor, Anthony Russell T. Villanueva, Jay B. Villavicencio, Jesus Randy O. Canal, M.D., adviser.

Malunggay works. A controlled, randomized, double-blind study was done to determine the optimum dose of Natalac capsules consisting of 250 mg of dried *malunggay* leaves. These capsules were given to 60 nursing Filipino mothers for 2 months in an attempt to increase the amount of breast milk. The study found significant increases in the weight and length for both OD and BID Natalac treatment groups as well as improved lactation in the BID group over the others. *A Randomized, Double-Blinded Parallel-Controlled Clinical Trial on the Effectiveness of Different Doses of Moringa oleifera (Malunggay) in Promoting Growth in Infants of Breastfeeding Mothers from UERMMMC and Different Hospitals in MetroManila from June 2000 to January 2001* by Marlon F. Balahibo, Jennifer C. Balde, Zea Leigh D. Baldovino, Pacholo C. Baquiran, Chanda Marie O. Barillos, Carlo G. Barredo, Floro B. Madarcos, M.D. and Suzette M. Mendoza, M.D. advisers.

The UERMMMC College of Medicine

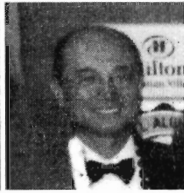
is now accepting applications for the first year class of the 2004-2005 schoolyear. For further information, please call the Registrar's Office at 011-632-713-3315, visit uermmmc.edu, uermmmc.org or contact the newsletter.

In addition to academic and documentary requirements, applicants must take the NMAT (National Medical Admission Test) given in Manila, New York or Los Angeles, and arrange for an interview with any of the alumni designated in the instructions.

CME showcases alumni expertise, loyalty



Dr. Querubin



Dr. Puno



Dr. Goodman



Dr. Dee



Dr. Camara



As in conventions past, the CME program in Hawaii featured UERMMMC alumni. Through the efforts of Dr. Benjie Rigor, '62, moderator and chairman of the CME committee, last August's course touched on broad general medicine topics useful to primary care physicians. Attendees learned from an impressive faculty of academic and non-academic speakers, none except two of whom had any financial interests in their topics. Dr. Rene Querubin, association president, gave the opening remarks. Suggestions for future programs are welcome and may be sent to Dr. Benjamin Rigor, 6801 Shadwell Place, Prospect, KY 40059, (502) 852-5851 office hours, (502) 282-798 after office hours and weekends, or email at bmrigoo1@qwise.louisville.edu.

Rheumatology for the non-rheumatologist

"Initiate aggressive treatment early" in rheumatoid arthritis "because of likely severe disability." This was the advice of Dr. Rouel N. Querubin, '95 University of Georgia Medical School, rheumatologist from Gwinnett Medical Center in Atlanta, son of President Dr. Rene Querubin, and the very first alumni child to give a lecture before a UERMMMC convention.

After reviewing the diagnostic clinical and radiologic features of the disease, he outlined the current DMARDS treatment options and emphasized that combinations of the "gold standard methotrexate" with one or two other choices may give 50% better result than monotherapy. He cautioned however that frequent monitoring must accompany DMARDS. He also discussed the encouraging results of new treatments including anti-TNF, interleukin-1, and a pyrimidine inhibitor. Interesting pictures of other forms of arthritides were also shown.

Tincture of time for low back pain

"Only 4% of low back pain require surgery" and "whatever surgery will do will never bring the patient's back to normal level." Thus advised Dr. Rolando "Randy" Puno, silver jubilarian and Assistant Clinical Professor of Orthopedics at the University of Louisville, Kentucky.

He taught his audience to recognize the 3 stages of low back pain (discogenic, radicular, and combination), diagnose it properly preferring MRI over myelogram and if necessary discography, and to

treat it conservatively at first for 6 months before surgery is contemplated.

He explained in power-point precision the details of nerve root decompression and fusion procedures to relieve a patient's intractable back pain. Puno reminded his fellow alumni that "the natural history of most low back pain is spontaneous remission."

Treating headache head-on

Dr. Stuart Goodman, another silver jubilarian, Chairman of the Department of Neurology at Southern Maryland Hospital in Clinton, and the next president of the Philippine Medical Association of DC-Virginia area, brought the CME participants to their feet when he opened his talk with an emotional statement affirming his academic

"I am honored to represent those in my class who are here and also those who are not here. I thank UERMMMC for the opportunity given me to fulfill my dream of becoming a doctor!"
- Stuart Goodman, M.D.

roots: "I am honored to represent those in my class who are here and also those who are not here. I thank UERMMMC for the opportunity given me to fulfill my dream of becoming a doctor!"

He then imparted these pearls: most chronic sinus headaches are actually migraine, "use triptans early in the attack (less than 2 hours from onset)," and reassuringly "there are not that many 5-HT_{1B} receptors in the coronary arteries" that should scare doctors from using triptans but he advised a cardiac clearance if necessary before their use. Preventive measures, migraine prophylaxis, and new treatment horizons rounded out his lecture.

Depression and amphetamines

Dr. Peter J. Dee, '75, practicing internist-psychiatrist in Honolulu discussed the current and emerging trends in the treatment of depression in the primary care setting. The newest, he said, are stimulants like amphetamines which are now cautiously used in patients without cardiac problems.

Telemedicine in ophthalmology

Recent Advances in Ophthalmology by Dr. Jorge Camara, U.P. '75, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology at Hawaii's John A. Burns School of Medicine, introduced the conventioners to the reality of telemedicine which he pioneered in Hawaii. Camara who has been active in training ophthalmology fellows in the Philippines uses real-time videoconferencing to teach his fellows and to perform computer-assisted or "image-guided" surgical procedures in outlying Hawaiian islands.

Chronic asthma trends

The all-UERMMMC presentations in the afternoon started with Dr. Jeffrey C. Kam, '85, Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatric Allergy and Immunology at Hawaii's lone medical school, who emphasized combined inhaled beta-agonist and steroid for chronic or prolonged asthma with the optional addition of anti-leukotrienes.

Restriction, restriction, retraction for diabetes

Frank Singer, M.D., '82, urged better education of diabetics especially Filipino women who were found in a San Diego, California study to have a 36% chance of having diabetes compared with white women (12%). His admonition: caloric retraction, saturated fat restriction, alcohol restriction, carbohydrate restriction, and exercise!

Statins now before the infarcts

The only ruby jubilarian speaker, Dr. Alberto Querimit, Assistant Professor of Medicine at the the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, reviewed the guidelines for treating dyslipidemias including triglycerides above 500 mg%. For most cases, statins are still the choice, he said. He decried the fact that "only 38% of patients have achieved control so we have a long way to go." He concluded with a jeremiad: "Treat now before the cardiovascular events!"

Congestive heart failure then and now

In the final lecture of the day, Dr. Romeo Divinagracia, '63, warned that "heart failure cases are rising because we are all getting older" and that "50% of them will die within 5 years" from onset. He reviewed its neurohormonal pathophysiology, verified 2-D echo/doppler and the new BNP (B-natriuretic peptide) as most useful diagnostic tests. ACE-inhibitors, B-blockers, spironolactones & ARBs are now the drugs of choice, he concluded.

Class Notes

Forever young '62

This class' enthusiasm is infectious. They had a reunion in New York in 2002 complete with a CME all by themselves, then they went to Honolulu under Romy Pineda's wings, and have big plans for the December homecoming. Three are giving lectures at the CME after attending the convocation, they'll be at the fellowship night and are even having a family day in Nelly Lukban-Angeles' place in Pampanga on the 21st. They seem to have just reached their 25th jubilee and are so energetic. Watch out '77!

Loyal and true '67

Easily the biggest contingent in Hawaii, this enormously successful and politically active batch you have to admire and emulate. They care very much about the *Alma Mater* and the alumni organizations that you cannot help but follow their lead. A truly jaded class! Thank you for bringing us on board.

'68 good Samaritans

Their chat room questions a lot of oppressive things in the existing order and may seem to take us to a "galaxy far, far away" but down here, they are preparing for another medical mission up in Tony Ligot's Good Shepherd Hospital in Banawe on January 7-14, 2003. Ani and Roly Sabundayo are on their way soon. Kuya Totoy and Ate Elsie are asking for help in this project. You can send samples, med-surg supplies and money (checks payable to Foundation for Aid in the Philippines, Inc., they're all tax-deductible) in care of Bayani Elma, M.D., 10907 Tony Drive, Lutherville, MD 21093. Clearly, they are on the side of angels!

Congratulations to '71's Hedy

Hedy-Jimenez-Windsor, former alumni association secretary, was inducted as President of the Philippine Medical Association of West Virginia at the group's annual convention on October 11-13 in Charleston. Music was provided by the New Flipside Band to which classmate Cris Gualberto belonged. See, doctors can sing!

Preparing for pearl the '73 way

Here's the scoop. Debbie Bobila promises a blast in NYC with a one day extra stay at The Regent after the 15th convention. Henry Yanez is putting together a medical mission, an interisland class trip to either Visayas and/or Mindanao "courtesy of Abu Sayyaf" *sabi nila*, and a grand alumni participation for December 2003. Debbie wishes "classmates who have not joined us in the past will join us this time!" Thanks Debbie, let's work on it. Hey twin class, always one, always fun!

Why we are physicians in the first place

In this issue, we hear from a very young alumnus, Dr Marlon Mangahas, class 1999, who just like many of us some years ago had come to America for advancement. He faces similar odds that we faced but the following expresses his answer to a calling that we all once heard. This is his personal statement in his application for a residency that is yet to accept him. You can also read his letter on page 13. Editor

Beyond the power of drugs is the ability to touch another persons' life in the simplest and yet profound way. To many troubled people in search of true healing, I have learned that a little care goes a long way.

One Sunday night before the weeklong exams during my first year in medical school, a person from my dormitory came up to me and asked if we could talk. His voice was trembling while puffing sticks of Marlboro, so I hesitantly agreed and offered to drive him along Roxas Blvd. by Manila Bay. Along the way, he told me that he just broke up with his girlfriend because she was seeing another man. I listened and encouraged him to try to work things out with her and hoped that everything would be fine. He decided to stay in my room for the night but at about 3 AM he woke me up and asked to go to the hospital because he could not sleep. He was trembling, sweating, felt warm to touch and his eyes were wide open. He admitted that he had been taking amphetamine till that afternoon he came to talk to me. So I took him to the nearest emergency room. There they castigated him for taking drugs. He needed to be detoxed, we were told, but we left the hospital because there was no vacancy. He went back to his dorm and I went to school and took my exams that day. I forgot to get him a toxicologist as promised. I later found out that he finally decided to call his parents who got him admitted to the same hospital. He was eventually discharged, got better and went back to school. Few months later, he came to tell me that they were moving to the United States. We exchanged phone numbers and addresses. Since then, I rarely heard from him and finally lost touch with him.

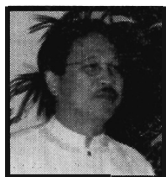
Years later while on vacation in the U.S., I decided to call him. I visited him and found out that he had gotten married 2 years ago and made me one of his children's godfather. He introduced me to his wife and to the rest of his family as "the one who saved my life!" I asked him later why he said that. He admitted that that night he bumped into me and talked to me, he was actually contemplating suicide. And I was the first person in the dorm that he saw at the time. Had I not been available to listen to him that night, he would have let himself be run over by a huge trailer passing along the street by the dorm. I did not know what to say but I was touched by his gratitude. I didn't know that the small talk we had made a lot of difference.

Looking back, I could not help but realize that beyond knowing the pathophysiology of a disease and its management, the most important aspect in healing is listening. Unfortunately in these time of great technological advancements when medical care has become more institutionalized and its delivery depersonalized, listening has seemingly assumed a secondary role. As I recall this memorable experience, I am reminded that more important than seeing a patient as an "interesting case," is a physician's responsibility to provide care and compassion to a fellow human being in need. I believe pursuing a residency program in psychiatry where the biological, psychological and social aspects of healing are emphasized more than in any other medical specialty will help me become a better physician. I know that your program, providing an excellent training in both clinical care and research will allow me to realize this dream.

'74 remembers with yearbook

The long-awaited yearbook finally came out last summer. Kudos to the staff headed by Madz San Luis and the steering committee ran by Ellen Reyes-Dayoy & Janina Alejandro-Bucu under the overall leadership of class prexy Alex Varilla. Menen spoke for everyone as she wrote "thank you so much for remembering What a great job! I'm sorry to have missed all the fun you guys had

getting together for the silver jubilee I tell you the feelings evoked in me as I turned the pages of the yearbook took me back in time I was nostalgic for those good old times!" You are most welcome, Mennen. Come to the 30th, 35th, 40th etc. ones that the class has yet to celebrate. Ellen suggests that the class now "shift attention to our donation to our beloved institution and the 30th year of celebration of our batch." Revive the '74 cyberkada. Contact merdayo@yahoo.com!



Inaugural Address

by Joseph S. Rastrollo, M.D.
President, 2002-2004

This is my first opportunity to address you as president of UERMMMCMAAA, Inc., an office I am honored to accept. For the past 14 years, I have watched my predecessors, Drs. Benjamin Narrajos, Rogelio Sion, Bayani Elma, Conrado Miranda, Vincent Casibang, Benjamin Rigor, and Renato Querubin, with deepest respect and admiration. They have left a legacy of accomplishments which will be difficult to match. All of us are aware of their tireless examples during the past few years and we owe them a sincere debt of gratitude.

Our annual convention and reunion proved to be an enjoyable and productive event. Our dedicated Executive Director Dr. Rolando Mendoza and our motivated Hawaiian alumni group arranged interesting activities and a memorable alumni program. We are indebted to Dr. Ben Rigor, chairman of the CME, for a masterful presentation of our continuing medical education. Our sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Fortunato Elizaga, overall convention chairman and the benevolent Hawaiian group for their time and effort in hosting this successful event.

Dr. El Castro, chairman of the foundation, presented his usual meticulous and lucid foundation report. The foundation continues to thrive under his strong leadership by strengthening the relation with the alumni association and solidifying the relationship with our *Alma Mater* through the dean's office.

Our chapter organizations continue to function well and provide leadership in their own respective areas. We encourage the formation of more chapters as they are designed to cast a wide net to personally contact as many alumni as possible. After an extremely cordial meeting with the dean of the medical school, Dr. Erlinda Valdellon, and the president of the medical center, Dr. Romeo Divinagracia, their reports proved once again that there is a continuous need for assistance and support from medical alumni to sustain growth and nurture the ideals of the medical center.

As I reflect on the formation of the organization 14 years ago, I cannot help but appreciate how dramatically our organization has changed and progressed. We have come a long way. For instance, the association and foundation are now working hand-in-hand in disseminating information to our alumni about the needs of our *Alma Mater* with the foundation serving as the charity arm of the association.

We are starting to recognize the value of change and willingness to implement such change in running our organization. Instituting change which I call progress needs to be applied in how we manage our association. We cannot be complacent. We need to look to the future.

Each year, the leadership meets to set short and long-term goals, to refine objectives, and propose new ones, with the ultimate intent of responding to the needs of members and our *Alma Mater* while preserving its fiscal soundness.

As I look to the future, there is an important aspect in our organization which I would like to comment on: the role of young alumni. Young members are the building blocks of our future. We should reach out to them. Include them in governance, in committees and various activities. Given the opportunity, they will respond with undisciplined enthusiasm. The association should listen to their concerns and respond to their new ideas. They should be well represented and communication with them should be open. To strengthen our organization, we need to actively include young members in all our activities. We must be prepared to embrace new ways of doing things to be effective in the future.

I would like to appeal to each of you to support our cause and actively participate in all our activities. Although some of you are already strong in the fold, I know that there are moments when we find ourselves questioning whether the association truly represents our interests. Please get past those moments and imagine the success that we can have if we all work together.

In conclusion, I want to commend our outgoing president, Dr. Querubin, for his leadership, his perseverance, and his courage in representing the association and its members during a very challenging year. I thank all of you for giving me the privilege of becoming your new president. It is my desire that, with your help and active participation, we can successfully meet the challenges of this dynamic era and we can present ourselves with pride even as we pursue greater tasks ahead.

*From the Executive Director
Inene Ibanez-Maulapaz, M.D.*

Congratulations to the newly elected alumni association officers for 2002-2004. I am honored to be the executive director for 2002-2005. My main job will be that of general manager or chief operating officer (COO) of the association.

As in the past administration, the association will provide venue for alumni to recapture the camaraderie of school days past and obtain continuing medical education at the annual conventions and reunion. The executive committee which includes all the chapter presidents have decided to have 3 consecutive years of meeting venues already planned so the respective convention committees will have plenty of time to negotiate for good hotel room rates and food prices. In 2003, 2004, and 2005, the venues are New York City, Chicago, and Houston, respectively. To inform our young alumni how we select the meeting venue, this is based on 2 important factors: (1) regional rotation and (2) availability of regional chapter or group of alumni who can host the convention. There are many alumni who wish to have it again in Las Vegas. My advice is for a West Coast chapter or alumni group to organize and inform the leadership of their willingness to take on the responsibility of a convention organizing committee.

The annual convention and reunion is also the main source of fund raising by the association for the projects of the alumni foundation. We encourage all alumni to attend this yearly event and to place advertisements, promotional or complimentary greetings with our Souvenir Program. Besides helping a worthy cause, these ads may be business tax-deductible (please consult your accountant!). The association's Federal Tax I.D Number is 52-1745846.

It is also the goal of your new leadership to encourage younger alumni to be active in the association. The Membership Committee chaired by Agnes Alikpala, '67, with members Merlyn Asuncion, '77, Rommel Aquino, '85, and yours truly, and different chapter presidents is currently updating the alumni directory. The association plans to publish an alumni membership directory to facilitate networking among alumni. If you know of any alumni who have not received our Alumni Newsletter, please send their names and addresses to any member of the membership committee or to our editor-in chief Sammy Piga, '73.

UERMMMCMAAA, Inc.

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

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Please send membership dues

(annual = \$50, lifetime = \$500) payable to UERMMMC-MAAA, Inc..

Treasurer: Sonia Rico-Todd, M.D.

400 N. Front St., Syracuse, IN 46567

\$\$\$\$ Treasury Notes \$\$\$\$

by Cristy Magpantay, M.D. '69



Outgoing treasurer Cristy Magpantay reports that the association is in full compliance with applicable regulations, specifically that the IRS Income Tax Return for the fiscal year ending July 31, 2001 had been filed on time in the State of Maryland where the association has been incorporated as a charitable organization. The just ended fiscal year return is due in December.

I. Cash-on-hand at beginning of fiscal year (August 1, 2001)	\$81,687 71
II. INCOME	
A. Cleveland Convention	108,276.37
B. Dues collected as of July 31, 2002	5,250.00
C. Interest Income	296.64
Total Income	113,823.01
III. TOTAL EXPENSES	
A. Cleveland Convention	73,796.37
B. Accountant	975.00
C. Newsletter (3 issues)	7,500.00
D. Hawaii Convention seed money	5,000.00
E. UERMMMC Alumni Foundation USA, Inc.	30,000.00
F Postage	103.26
G. Administrative expenses	2,072.94
H. Website	150.00
Total Expenses	119,597.57
IV NET INCOME	(5,774.56)
V Cash-on-hand as of end of fiscal year (July 31, 2002)	75,913.15

Minutes of Annual Meeting

by Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, M.D., '75
Outgoing Secretary



With quorum established, the president, Renato Querubin, called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM, Saturday, August 3, 2002 at Hawaiian Village Hotel, Honolulu Hawaii. The minutes of the last annual executive council meeting was approved with minor corrections.

The treasurer's reports were then heard as detailed above and adopted. Transfer of checking account and financial records to incoming treasurer Sonia Rico-Todd of Indiana was approved. Executive Director Rolando Mendoza endorsed unfinished projects to the new executive director. Report approved. He also tendered his resignation for the remaining year of his term. This was also accepted.

Five chapters gave reports. Northern California had no representatives. Northeast outlined efforts being initiated for the 2003 convention in NYC. MARVADC reported 115 members, a new president, Renato Flores, '78, coffers of \$7,000, and plans for joint medical missions with UP and UST grads. Florida donated \$1,000 to national office's LCD projector purchase. Southern California announced its \$1,400 donation to the

Department of Medicine's journal subscription and two medical missions to Cebu and Laoag in early 2003. The Newsletter reported a circulation of 2,000, purchase of a laptop computer and digital camera and current plans to go on-line.

There was scant report from the standing committees. The appointments of the incoming president were acknowledged. The audit committee will report during the interim meeting in December. The 14th convention financial report was not yet available but the attendance of about 120 alumni was noted. About 200 were expected at the gala. Income and expenses will be reported later.

The auxiliary Alliance & Friends, Inc. reported receipts of \$1,700 from the silent auction and \$805 from sale of T-shirts. Raffle results were yet to be announced at the gala.

The incoming president Joseph Rastrollo presented a temporary budget outline based on projected income of about \$82,000 allocating 30% for administration, 34% for alumni foundation, 9% newsletter, 25% for the 2003 convention, and 2% for miscellaneous expenses.



Dr. Roly Mendoza opens gala. Dr. Querubin gives valedictory.



Registration Desk led by Dr. Fortunato Elizaga



Councilor Romy Cachola swears in the new association officers.



Alliance & Friends officers taking their oath before Dr. Querubin.



Dr. Renato Querubin turns over presidency to Dr. Joseph Rastrollo.



Association Executive Council in session



Dr. Rastrollo informally meets with newly elected officers.



The A-Team: Drs. Divinagracia, Rastrollo, Blas, Valdellon, Asuncion, Perez-Suntay, Rico-Todd, and Firmalo



Happy '77ers with UERMMM bigwigs & Saling Pusa and



The Jaded '67, semper fi!



eating together



enjoying Hawaii together



They can swoon and they can certainly dance the hula!



Dear '77ers, your classmates at home await you!



'75's foursome hosted by Dr. Peter Dee



Spirit of '76 lives on!



'73 mini-reunion in Q.C. after Hawai with Drs. Valdellon & Alikpala

Editorials

The legacy of Hawaii

The just concluded convention and reunion at the paradise Island of Oahu will be remembered for three reasons. First, it was happily well managed. Happy because all of the 19 alumni from all of Hawaii led by Dr. Fortunato Elizaga wholeheartedly accepted the difficult job of hosting the event at the outset. As a result, the organization, implementation and conduct of the convention, though imperfect, had a perceptible light-heartedness befitting the gaiety of the locale. It was the ideal setting for many happy return of memories and much closeness among attendees especially the jubilarians.

Second, it affirmed the presence of a core group of dedicated alumni who care deeply about the *Alma Mater*, and who continue to strive for the unity and loyalty of all graduates. As a result, the examples of outgoing leaders and active members have inspired the emergence of new and enthusiastic ones. So the transition of leadership and responsibility we witnessed there has meant that the one seen in Las Vegas in 2000 and those before would be repeated for years to come, ensuring the viability and growth of our alumni organizations.

Third, it demonstrated the growing generosity of alumni to the *Alma Mater*. The responses to the fund-raising efforts and financial reports have proven that when given a clear purpose for and a transparent mechanism of donation, our graduates stand up and could be counted on. Just be at the wish list auction and you will catch this contagion!

And many more reasons, big and small, some indescribable, others intangible yet each one heart-warming leading a jubilarian to feel "spiritually recharged."

Let us keep cultivating these traditions and proudly share them with all graduates. Thank you Hawaii for continuing to bring out the best in all of us!

Is UERMMMC competitive?

This question has rung louder since the "dismal" board exam results last August. Yet long before this shocking "wake-up call," several signs already pointed to a negative answer: the closure of the medical school in 1995 staved off only by a government order otherwise, relegation of the school into the 5th choice of medical school applicants in the country, and most recently, the steep decline in freshman enrollment in the current school year.

Let us examine the reasons. In the Philippines today, there are 30 medical schools other than UERMMMC. Each tries to fill its enrollment quota allowed by the CHED (Commission on Higher Education) from a pool of about 4,000 applicants nationwide vying for total freshman slots of 3,500. UERM receives about 1,000 for its quota of 330 which it had been able to fill until last year.

In such a marketplace, the school must deliver a high quality of medical education for a reasonable price to remain competitive. Does it offer such product? Former Dean Lansang's administration compiled a survey of applicants' impression of UERM that showed that UERM's fees are deemed more expensive and its facilities less desirable than those of the other schools in Metro Manila. Another is the dearth of scholarships available to deserving but less financially able applicants who are chosen but unable to matriculate.

That's from potential consumers. What do the school's actual consumers, our present students think? In 2001, the alumni foundation found out in its survey that they felt that they are getting a good education at UERM but for perceived inconveniences from inadequate facilities, clinical faculty tardiness, and negative experiences in the clinics.

To reverse these minuses, the concerns of students must be addressed and their well-being and success promoted. To her credit, former Dean Lansang conducted intensive faculty workshops and seminars and cultivated alumni support. The new Dean Dr. Valdellon has initiated policy changes to raise academic standards in both undergraduate and postgraduate classes. The administration has been supportive in all of these. But more must be done.

The administration must continue to seek ways to make its operations *lean and mean*. The faculty must demand a high standard of performance from its ranks even as it demands the same from students. Alumni must support these school constituents in any way they can for no institution can compete without the help of her alumni. Whether we like it or not, we the alumni are the best salespeople and reservoir of goodwill for our school. Whichever way we behave and conduct ourselves after graduation reflects on the education we get from her and, consequently, whatever we do or not do for her results in her flourished existence or painful demise.

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*** Please send articles, news items, notices, announcements, photos, and other contributions to the Editor-in-Chief at the above mailing or e-mail addresses. Photos unless otherwise requested will be kept on file.***

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Full page ads \$250; Half-page \$125.

Quarter page \$75. Please make checks payable to UERMMMC-MAAA, Inc.

Payment and your ads may be mailed to the editor-in-chief.

From Alumni Active Desktops

Lolo Totog '68: *Mga Makabagong Kaalaman*

Backlog *bacon saka egg* Deduct *ang pato*

Defeat *ang paa* Defense *ang bakod*

Deflate *ang plato* Defrag *and palaka*

Detest *ang eksamin* Devote *ang boto*

Effort *'dun nagla-land ang efflane*

July *nagsimungaling ka ba?*

Protestant *- tindahan ng prutas*

Predicate *pakawalan mo ang pusa*

Torpedo *takot manligaw*

Chona '77: English Phrase-Chinese Translation

Are you harboring a fugitive? *Hu yu hai ding*

See me A.S.A.P *Kum hia nao*

Your price is too high! *No bai dam ting!*

I think you need a facelift. *Chin tu fat*

This is a tow-away zone. *No pah king*

I got this for free. *Ai no pei*

He's cleaning his automobile. *Wa shing ka*

Jrene '75: Accountants and auditors

What's an accountant? Someone who solves a problem you didn't know you had in a way you do not understand.

What's an auditor? Someone who arrives after the battle and bayonets all the wounded.

Letters to the Editor

From Batangas via email

My warmest greetings!

Last August 14, I have been thankful to receive 2 copies of the Alumni Newsletter from you and Dr. El Castro. At this point, I would like to inquire if there has been a response to my appeal. I have intended to follow up at a later date. Whatever it may be, I know you'll understand that I'm still hoping for favorable reply

Mia S. Garcia, M.D. '89

(Editor: The next letter is a second one sent by Mia in response to my request for an update of her condition. Any assistance you can extend to her is greatly appreciated. You can contact her directly at 007 Barangay Pagaspas, Tanauan City, Batangas 4232, cellphone 0917-347-7839, or email: maidabaladad@mariwasa.com.)

Along with almost generalized numbness/paresthesia due to polyneuropathy, my concern at present is the related problem of neurogenic bladder. I am experiencing difficulty in voiding and oftentimes I complain of urinary and bowel inconvenience. Due to these, I underwent KUB-UTZ last Oct.1 here in Tanauan. Findings showed a significant post-void urine. An IVP was negative except for urinary retention. Urologists I have consulted highly suggest clean intermittent catheterization which I still have to master and do by myself with necessary precautions to avoid risks of UTI.

I have resumed my practice last June in my clinic here at home using a computer chair to move around since I find it more convenient than my wheelchair. Expectedly, patients come only in trickles as most parents in this community of *barangays* consult more prominent pediatricians in town and others approach the customary *herbolarios*. It will certainly take considerable time for my practice to pick up and be able to support my medications particularly Neurontin. It goes without saying that I still seek the kind assistance of friends and colleagues in our profession.

Thank you for whatever support our co-alumni can extend to me. More power and God bless!

Mia S. Garcia, M.D. '89

From Dallas

Thank you for sending the UERMMM Alumni Newsletter. I wish to congratulate you for a great job in reaching your fellow medical graduates. You will be an inspiration to reach the goal of practicing here in the U.S.

Hoping to meet you in the future.

Roland Vergel De Dios, M.D. '86

From Nevada

I am saddened in part, angered and disappointed in whole to read of what Dr. Rocha had to endure and go through to finish medical school. I find it very insulting to humanity that such an Institution of Higher Learning would treat its alumnus in a very demeaning manner. However, I am not surprised that this Institution would do such a thing.

I graduated in 1970 and few of my classmates were not allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony not because they did not fulfill all requirements for graduation but because they were punished for what they did during our strike a few months before the end of the school year. I thought then that this was a very insensitive and unjust punishment for something that the Class of '70 did for a good and noble cause. Those who did not join the graduation have never forgotten this unjust punishment done to them by the *Alma Mater* and probably never will as long as they live. However, our strike paved the way for better relationship between interns and the teaching staff.

The medical school should structure a loan for Dr. Rocha and release his credentials so he can take his boards. This way he can get on with his life and be able to pay back his loan. He seems to be a bright kid finishing in the top third of his class. It would be stupid on the part of the school not to give him a chance to further his career so he could pay off his debt. If it is here in America, this would never happen. Everyone here is given a chance to pursue his or her dreams regardless of economic status.

The dean should have intervened in this matter on his behalf. If the dean does not care about the welfare of students, may be she should not be the dean at all.

The Medical Alumni Association of America should rally behind Dr. Rocha. The answer to this problem is not monetary donation to pay off his debt but for the association to put pressure on the school to structure his loan and release his credentials so he can take his boards, get a gainful employment so he can pay off his loan. Similar situations may occur in the future and the school should be there to help out the underprivileged, not to punish.

My heart goes out to Dr. Rocha and his family especially his grandmother who supported him all these years until she

became ill and incapacitated because of multiple strokes.

We Filipinos have "sets of values" that are very different from our American counterparts.' Unless we change them the Philippines will remain a third world country for generations to come.

Paul L. Hamor, Jr., M.D. '70

From Virginia via email

Thanks for your email. I have been receiving copies of the alumni newsletter you are doing a great job! Congratulations! Please let me know how I can help with keeping things going for UERM and the newsletter. Regards to everyone.

Ramon J. Aquino, M.D. '74

(Editor: Thank you so much. We need every help we can get. Write something about issues you have read in the newsletter. You can contribute your time with your local alumni chapter help us list as many graduates as you know so we can reach more of them, contribute any amount you can give to your class fund through the alumni foundation, or you can advertise in the newsletter.)

From Ohio via email

Greetings to you and your family!

I am Dr. Marlon G. Mangahas. I graduated from UERM in 1999 and took the Philippine licensure examination in August 2000 after completing a post-graduate internship at the Philippine General Hospital.

I am seeking a residency position in psychiatry with internal medicine as my second choice. I currently have an ECFMG certification.

I would like to seek your help regarding this. Any assistance from you or any of our fellow UERM alumni will be deeply appreciated.

Thank you very much.

Marlon G. Mangahas, M.D. '99

(Editor: You can contact Dr. Mangahas directly at 5841 Chestnut Hills Drive, Parma, OH 44129, 440-842-9195, or marloney99@hotmail.com)

From Hawaii via email

Please change my address to: 27-547 Old Mamalahoa Hwy, Papaikou, HI 96781, Phone (808) 964-2100, Cellphone (808) 936-4059, email *Daliza@mac.com*. Specialty: physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Liza Maniquis-Smigel, M.D. '88

(Editor: Thank you very much Liza)

Class 2001's continued from page 4

Dean Valdellon, in response to *Newsletter* inquiry, clarified that the medical center through the years has conducted board reviews for August exams for a fee of P5,000 but not the February ones. But because of the low passing rate last August, Chairman P.O. Domingo offered P250,000 for the repeaters' review session for the coming February boards. It will be tuition-free for the examinees but the faculty will be paid P800 per hour.

She added that a curriculum consultant, Dr. Roel Romero, would implement a new review strategy that would emphasize "mastery of subject matter." It will consist of 3 tests. First a diagnostic pre-test to uncover inadequacies, then a second take-home one after a required day of self-study with the help of faculty, and a third one to test examinees for their preparedness on a particular subject.

For the long term beginning with the 1st PBL batch of 2002 which is expected to take the next August board exams and henceforth, the Dean has instituted remedial measures to correct "perceived inadequacy of the content of the curriculum" such as closer monitoring of senior interns' performance, Quintessential Lectures, better evaluation of senior interns, and more teaching," etc. under the "very creative" implementation of the innovative curriculum for junior interns by Dr. Susan Pelea-Nagtalon, the new 4th year coordinator

Hawaii nets \$25,310

As we go to press, Dr. Fortunato V. Elizaga, '67, overall convention chairman turned in his final report for the just concluded 14th convention and reunion in Honolulu. In a memo to key alumni officers dated October 15, 2002, Elizaga detailed the facts and figures in the said gathering, showing a total income of \$79,170.31 and expenses of \$53,859.95, thereby netting \$25,310.36.

The top 3 grossers were gala night (22%), CME (15%), and donations (14%). The biggest expenses were hotel (55%), cruise (17%), and luau (10%). The total registrants were 119 alumni. The jade '67 jubilarians had the largest contingent with 17 delegates followed by the '77 silver celebrants at 12. Classes not represented were '70, '80-'84, '89, '91 to '97, and '99-'02. The youngest attendee was Dr. Marilen Camero of '98. Nine from the ruby jubilarian '62 came, 8 from pearl jubilarian '72. The two other big delegations were '73 (10) and '63 (9).

Dr. Elizaga wrote "Although it was hard work, I had fun working with all of you..."

25th reunion, there's nothing like it! by Susan Perez-Suntay, M.D. '77

No words can accurately describe the feelings we felt at our 25th reunion in Honolulu. All of us from Class '77 left Hawaii and bid each other farewell saying, "I'm so glad I came!"

We were dubbed the "Mighty Twleve" by Honolulu Councilman Romy Cachola because Class '77 exuded the feeling of joy, fun, and a great spirit of camaraderie. We were so excited to see each other again. We looked forward to each new day of spending time with each other and our families, especially when it came time to practice for our gala night program. Thanks to the patience of Merlyn Asuncion, our song and dance performance was "flawless" and done with much gusto. By the way, ask the meaning of "zebra" from any of the Mighty 12: Clarence Amayun, Merlyn Asuncion, Ruby Cecilio-Claravall, Stuart Goodman, Dini-Hartono-Rada, Connie Lazarraga-Del Mundo, Wes Marks, Susan Perez-Suntay, Randy Puno, Leonie Que-Firmalo, Jose Quiwa, and Sonia Rico-Todd. See what they say. We really had a sustained feeling of exhilaration for the entire reunion weekend. A real "high" without drugs.

I am personally glad and thankful that we have this alumni tradition. Unless you go through it, you really would not know what you have been missing and the feeling that you never want to leave your friends again. I dare say that attendance to the 25th reunion should be a mandatory requirement and commitment prior to graduation from medical school. The reunion made us reconnect with each other by all means possible, mostly by e-mails. So Class '78, don't miss your 25th reunion.

Our e-mails, phone calls, and visits are continuing. I feel like we had an unspoken pact of not allowing years to pass by before we reconnect with each other again. Even getting caught up with the "terrorism" time and threat of war, I am certain that some of us will still brave traveling to Manila to rejoin our classmates there who are busily preparing for the Manila Class '77 reunion. Although we live in uncertain times, there are still a few things we can be certain of like our old friends who did not really change, no love lost, and we all remain the same fun-loving classmates, just 25 years older.

Again, thank you or "Mahalo" to the alumni officers and the 14th annual convention organizers from all of us in the Class of '77. From "Aloha" to "Mabuhay," see you in Manila!

Convention tidbits

Golfers' knot - Ed Banez, Ani Ebilane, Lee Razalan, and Emil Padre barely made it to the last flight of Hawaiian Airlines out of Kawai back to Oahu of August 2. The reason: an exhilarating 36-hole round of golf on the fabled island's course, almost making golf widows out of their wives!

Bridge over water - Attending the USA alumni convention for the first time, Ed Firmalo '76, the new Philippine alumni association president, was just overwhelmed by what he saw when he commented "I am learning a lot from all of you!" He said he was taking home many ideas gathered from Honolulu and offered to establish a closer link with us. He caucused with Jeph Rastrollo and Irene Manlapaz on areas of possible collaboration to cement alumni relations. Let's do it Ed!

Memories etched - Clarence Amayun echoes every '77er's reflections of their 25th year reunion thus: "it was fun" to see classmates, their spouses & children, "to dance without practice," to remember those who are gone but "continue to live in our hearts." He said he was "tired/exhausted but spiritually recharged!"

For next year's jubilarians only

Unless you hear otherwise, the following are your class coordinators: Silver (Class '78) - Franklin de Guzman pole500@supernet.com; Ruby Reyes rcereyes@pol.net; Pearl (Class '73) - Eli de Leon erdmd@msn.com; Roy Baldomero BaldoRoy@aol.com; Jade (Class '68) - Roberto & Elsie Castrence Castrence@aol.com; Ruby (Class '63) El Castro elamor@optonline.net

Je me sobien (lest we forget)

Leadership workshop participants can make their reservations with Marriott Courtyard, 87 Glimcher Realty Way, Elizabeth, NJ 07201 through www.continental.com or 1-800-321-2211. Contact persons: Joan Shaw (908-436-9800) and Helene Tune (732-805-3837). Winter Weekend Value Rates: \$69/nite king size bed or 2 double beds).

Send your specialty journals dated 2000 and up as well as similarly dated book editions to the medical library through balikbayan box. Please contact Dick Ong at deklamong@yahoo.com.

Deadline for the pre-convention issue is February 1, 2003.

Convention Announcements

15th Annual Convention and Reunion
UERMMMMCMAAA, Inc. and UERMMC Alumni Foundation USA, Inc.
Ritz Carlton/Regent Wall Street Hotels
July 31 - August 2, 2003, New York City
Events Registration Form (Fee Per Person)

NAME _____ Yr. of Graduation _____
 MAIDEN NAME (Married Female Alumni) _____
 ADDRESS _____ (Home or Office?) _____

TEL: HOME _____ FAX _____
 OFFICE _____ FAX _____
 E-MAIL: HOME _____ OFFICE _____

Registration

Full Registration on or before 6/1/03	\$150.00	()	\$ _____
after 6/1/03	\$200.00	()	\$ _____
CME on or before 6/1/03	\$150.00	()	\$ _____
after 6/1/03	\$200.00	()	\$ _____
Gala on or before 6/1/03	\$150.00	()	\$ _____
after 6/1/03	\$170.00	()	\$ _____
Membership Dues: Annual	\$ 50.00	()	\$ _____
Lifetime	\$500.00	()	\$ _____

Social Events

Golf Tournament, Thursday, 7/31/03	TBA	()	\$ _____
Tennis Tournament, Thursday, 7/31/03	TBA	()	\$ _____
* Golf & Tennis	Pre-registration only by 7/15/03		
Welcome/Fellowship Party (included in full registration)	Thursday, 7/31/03. Extra tickets \$50/person	()	\$ _____
Cuyegkeng Memorial Luncheon Lecture (included in full registration), Friday, 8/1/03. Extra tickets \$70 per person		()	\$ _____
Gala Guest, Saturday, 8/2/03	\$150.00	()	\$ _____
Youth trip per person	TBA	()	\$ _____
TOTAL			\$ _____

Please make your check payable and send to:
UERMMC Alumni Foundation USA, Inc.
 c/o Belen Frias-Gilo, M.D.

2 Deer Run, Sparta, NJ 07871

Tel. (973) 729-7967 Email: egilo@attglobal.net

Overall Convention Chairman, Alex Bobila, M.D.

732 Highwoods Drive, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417, Tel: (201) 891-2829

(973) 471-8852 Email: dbob2001@yahoo.com

(For multiple registrations, please feel free to copy this form.)

UERMMMMCMAAA Alliance and Friends Post-Convention Report

by Esther N. Querubin

The leadership of the Alliance & Friends would like to acknowledge all those who have participated and donated in the Fund Raising and Silent Auction during the convention held in Hawaii last August 1-3, 2002. Their help and assistance turned this event into a success.

Our deep and sincere gratitude goes to our president, Fely Bangayan. It has always been her desire that during her term she will be able to raise a large sum of money to give to the Alumni Association and at the same time leave the Alliance money for projects we might want to undertake in the future. When her big fund raising idea of having a Miss UERMMMMCMAAA contest fell through from lack of candidates, she went with her other option of selling raffle tickets. She proceeded to sell by herself the bulk of the tickets to the Philippine-American Community in Ohio. Furthermore, she also donated most of the goods that were sold in the Silent Auction. Thank you very much Fely!

Financial Report

The cash amount that was awarded to the winners of the Raffle Tickets are as follows: First Prize \$300; Second Prize \$200; Third Prize \$100; Consolation Prize \$40. Total amount of prizes awarded: \$640. Note: The winners of the Raffle Tickets donated their prizes to the Alumni Foundation.

The total amount collected from the Silent Auction: \$1,007 Total amount from the sale of Raffle Tickets: \$2,090 after taking out the cash prizes of \$640. The total proceeds from both projects: \$3,097 Of this, \$2,000 was given to the Alumni Association which in turn donated it to the Alumni Foundation on behalf of the Alliance & Friends. \$1,097 was deposited in the Alliance's checking account.

Officers for 2002-2004

Dr. Penny Miranda, *President*

Odette Blas, *President-Elect*

Dr. Gemma Mendoza, *Vice-President*

Esther Querubin, *Secretary*

Violeta Rigor, *Treasurer*

Shirley Ong, *Auditor*

Fely Bangayan, *Executive Director/Adviser*

Board of Trustees: Amor Castro, Roger Saplan, Nieva Elizaga, Catherine Dona, Naomi Rastrollo

Dr. Rene Querubin is thankful to the Alliance and Friends for their hard work and dedication in helping make the convention in Hawaii a successful affair. Well done everybody!



Rebuilding the Spirit! The Northeast Chapter invites you to New York City in 2003!



Calling All Classes 1977, 1972, 1967, and 1962! Homecoming Schedule

Mabuhay! Malugod namin kayong inaanyayahan na dumalaw sa ating Alma Mater sa ika-32 alumni homecoming na gaganapin sa Pilipinas sa Disyembre 16-21, 2002.

For further details, please contact your respective class coordinators (those in bold are Philippine based) **UERMMMMC1977@yahooocgroups.com** for '77; Marile Narciso Hoffman at **MHoffman@concentric.net** or **Lily Sia-Vargas** at **lsv@edsamail.com.ph** for '72; for '67 **uermmmcc1967@yahooocgroups.com**; Benjie Rigor at **bmrigo01@louisville.edu**, Ernie Chua at **celimar@juno.com**, or **Joven Cuanang** (for the Philippine based classmates) for '62.

First Call For Classes '78, '73, '68 & '63

Come to the 15th national convention and reunion of UERMMMMC alumni in America on July 31 - August 2, 2003 to be held at the joint venues of Ritz Carlton and Regent Wall Street Hotels in downtown New York City and receive the felicitations of your peers on the occasion of your silver, pearl, jade and ruby anniversaries. See old and new friends, listen to outstanding lectures, speak at our forums, dance and laugh the time away Experience the Big Apple at its best! See page 15 for details.

Monday December 16, 2002
6:00 P.M. Grand Alumni Welcome Party (Colleges of Medicine, Nursing and Physical Therapy)

Tuesday, December 17, 2002
5:00 P.M. Tour of UERMMMMC
6:00 P.M. Carolfest

Wednesday, December 18, 2002
9 AM -12 NN Convocation Proper
12 NN - 2 PM Lunch & 4th Baccay Memorial Lecture
2 PM - 4 PM Scientific Meeting
4 PM - 5 PM Business Meeting
6:00 P.M. Lantern Parade
7:00 P.M. Batch '77 Class Night

Thursday, December 19, 2002
7:00 P.M. Grand Alumni Homecoming Night, Westin Plaza Hotel, CCP Complex, Pasay

Friday & Saturday, December 20-21
Class '77 family outing
Class '62 family day at Angeles City Pampanga



The Alumni Newsletter

UERMMMMC Medical Alumni Association of America, Inc.
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(469) 467-9755 e-mail: sapigamd@ipninet.com

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